# חרותינו

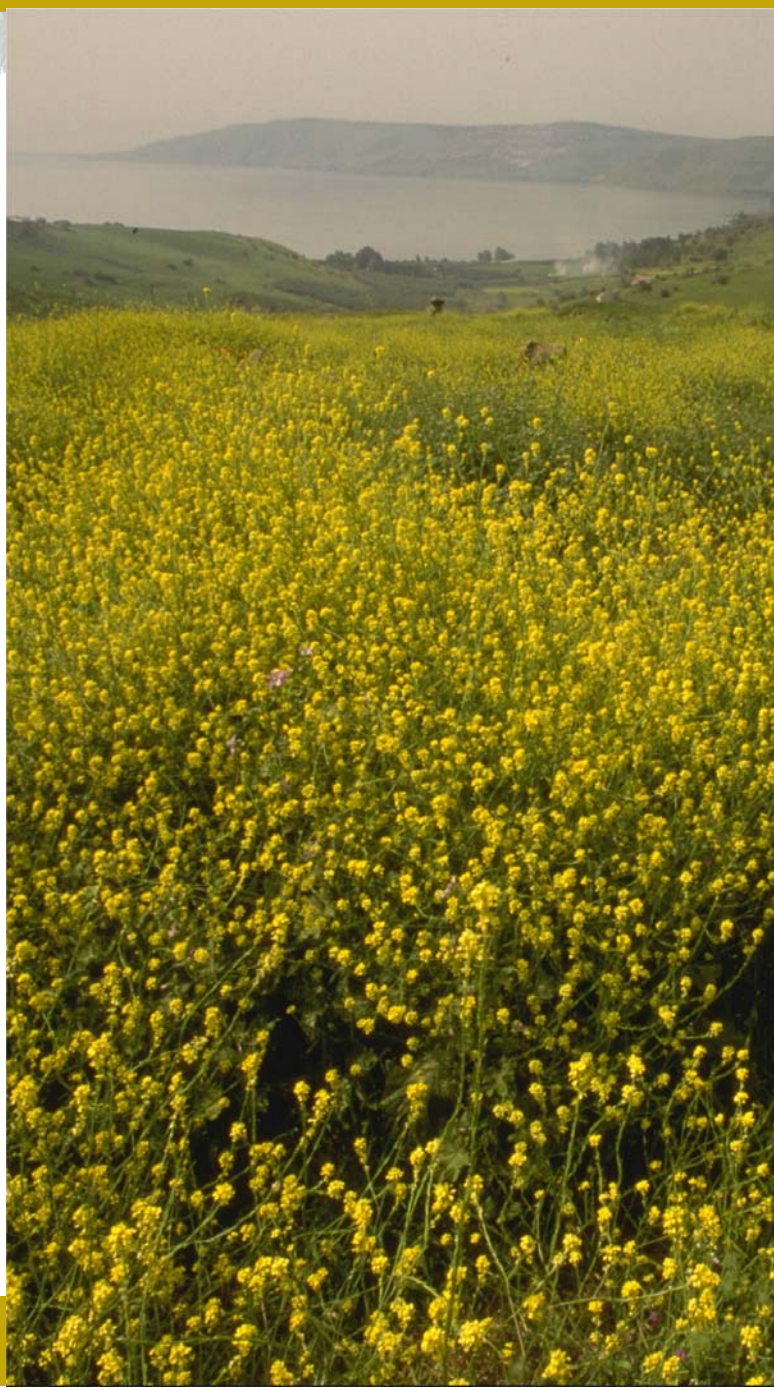
## Ḥerûṯênû, Our LIBERATION

Issue Three, April /May 2006

## *Freedom, Dor l'Dor!*

For thousands of years, *dor l'dor*, the people of Covenant have celebrated their freedom at *Pesaḥ*, Passover, at the beginning of the biblical year. The 'Evyonim especially celebrate Passover as many of us, like the ancient Israelites have literally left the environment of pagan savagery in order to live by a holy set of rules, principles and standards. Yet to many we sound like anarchists with our total distrust in our host society. The gentile society at large sees our Torah as "burdensome." What really upsets them is our refusal to bow to men and their arbitrary laws which change from one generation to the next to serve whoever is in power. The greatest freedom is not to be free from God and His laws. The greatest freedom is to freely obey God, without mediation or coercion; and to be free from the self-serving egos of men who want to stand in God's place. And so in each generation, generation to generation (*dor l'dor*), we remind ourselves at Passover of this true freedom and that only God can give.

*He turns a wilderness into a watershed, and a dry land into springs of water. And there He lets the hungry dwell, and they establish a city for dwelling and to sow fields and plant vineyards which yield fruits in plenty. He also blesses them so that they are greatly increased, yet does not allow their cattle to decrease. Still yet, they may be belittled and bowed down because of evil oppression and trouble. He will pour contempt upon the affluent, and cause them to wander in the waste, where there is no way. But He will put the needy out of reach from affliction, and make his families like a flock. The upright see it, and are glad; but all iniquity will be silent. Whoever is wise, let him act according to these things, and let them consider the mercies of YHWH.(-Tehillim 107:35-43)*



# The Ebionite Manifesto

The Ebionite Community is the living continuation of the Jewish religious movement of Jesus. Christianity is the religion of Paul and others, and not part of the biblical faith and revelation of the God of Israel nor is it of Jesus.

We declare the man Paul of Tarsus, the false teacher against the mark of Covenant and God's Torah, to be outside of the Way taught by Yeshua, the anointed, son of Miryam and Yosef.

Let his name, Paul, be accursed as he called God's Torah a curse. Let the afflictions he incited the gentiles to heap upon God's name and upon His People strike such great shame upon the gentiles that decent people among them will seek God in repentance from the man of Tarsus' Great Sin. Let the frontlets of their eyes and arm be bound with God's Torah and resist the mark of lawlessness.

We call upon the gentiles to repent, to abandon paganism and the perverse testament, and enter into true covenant through Torah, circumcision, and immersion in order to submit and prepare for the Reign of God as brothers exhibiting good works.

Your teachers, popes, ministers, priests, and leaders lead you to the outer darkness. They lie to you, rob you, abuse you, and use you to do likewise to others as they consume the whole world. They are idolaters who feed at Mammon's breast and have built the empire of Edom for two thousand years.

We expose your "apostle" as false; your "testament" as false; your society as false; your church, its rulers, your governments as false. Our allegiance and hope is to the God of Israel alone.

Yahwism, the faith of the Written Torah given by the One God, is a revolutionary system of life with justice that can supercede all other systems of government and ideologies. The Evyonim are Yahwists above all else. It allows for One Ruler, the God of Israel alone, with none beside Him. God is not man, and no man is divine. No man can make you right with God except yourself, and only you can atone for your sins through repentance and reparation to Him and your fellow man. You will never find God, Yahweh King of the Universe, world within worlds, worlds without end, in a church or shrine, kneeling before statues, sticks, stones, or men. Tear down your church and masjid. Take the wood and stones and build houses for the poor; take the sticks for firewood; sell the treasure and idols to buy food and heal the sick; bring all men in love to bend the knee to the God of Israel. **Yahweh Alone**.

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# Calendar

לוּחַ

## April /May 2006

### Readings for Shabbat, April and May 2006

| Week | Parasha | Haftara | Tehillim* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mar. 26-Apr. 3 | Wayyiqra: Le. 1.1-5.26 | Isaiah 43.21-44.23 | 73 |
| Apr. 5 -11 | Tzaw: Le. 6.1-8.36 | Jeremiah 7.21-8.3, 9.22-23 | 74 |
| Apr. 16-22 | Shemini: Le. 9.1-11.47 | II Samuel 6.1-7.17 (S'fardi ritual: II Samuel 6.1-19) | 75 |
| Apr. 23-29 | Tazria: Le. 12.1-13.59 | II Kings 4.42-5.19 | 76 |
| | Metzora: Le. 14.1-15.33 | II Kings 7.3-20 | 77 |
| Apr. 30-May 6 | Ahare Mot: Le. 16.1-18.30 | Ezekiel 22.1-19 (S'fardi ritual: Ezekiel 22.1-16) | 78 |
| | Qedoshim: Le. 19.1-20.27 | Amos 9.7-15 (S'fardi ritual: Ezekiel 20.2-20) | 79-84 |
| May 7-13 | Emor: Le. 21.1-24.23 | Ezekiel 44.15-31 | 85 |
| May 14-20 | Behar: Le. 25.1-26.2 | Jeremiah 32.6-27 | 86 |
| | B'khukotay: Le. 26.3-27-34 | Jeremiah 16.19-17.14 | 87-89 |
| May 21-27 | Bemidbar: Nu. 1.1-4.20 | Hosea 2.1-22 | 90-92 |

### Expected New Moon (Rosh Ḥodesh) Days

From Jerusalem
Friday evening, April 28, 2006
Sunday evening, May 28, 2006

### Special Days

Passover evening of Thursday, April 13
Unleavened Breads evening of Friday April 14 through till evening of April 21, 2006

# THE REAL STORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Revealing circumstances on the origins of the Christian Writings taken from an ancient document ***Tathbit Dala'il Nubuwwat Sayyidina Maḥammad, The Establishment of Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Muhammad,*** written by Muslim historian Abd al-Jabbar.

The *Tathbit* was studied by the late scholar Shlomo Pines in "The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christiantiy According to a New Source." (Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities II, No.13). Although the historian Abd al-Jabbar wrote against Christians and also heretical Muslim sects, there are some extraordinary bits of information unlike the typical Muslim polemics and not supporting the Muslim view, yet countering the Christian view concerning Yeshua, his teachings, and claims. Pines believed that the information originated from "Jewish Christians":

> " In spite of the historical explanation, I still had the uneasy feeling that the anti-Christian chapter represented an enigma of some kind and was in consequence finally impelled to read the whole text through. In the beginning this was a very mystifying experience. The whole thing only fell into focus when I grasped that, as far as its greater portion was concerned, these were not, and could not by any means be, texts of Moslem origin. When this became clear, a new hypothesis was required. A study of the texts showed that only one supposition as to their provenance was consonant with the facts. They could only derive from a Jewish Christian community and were rather maladroitly and carelessly adapted by 'Abd al-Jabbar for his own purposes. His additions and interpolations sometimes consist of a single explanatory sentence or part of a sentence; sometimes they extend over several folios. In most cases, though obviously not in all, there are indications which provide sufficient ground for differentiating these additions from the Judaeo-Christian texts in which they were interpolated."

The Ebionites also believe that this account from a thousand years ago, from the golden age of Islam and the Dark Ages of Christendom, provides a glimpse of the real followers of Yeshua, who were not Christians but of the Yahwistic (Jewish) movement, perhaps identical to the Ebionite Movement of today. What is astounding is that the teachings of our movement began to solidify 25 years ago, and long before we learned of the accounts concerning these ancient "ebionites." Yet we are standing in the same position as they and consider it a blessed thing.

Modern scholars have also come to align their theories with the testimony of these ancient ebionites concerning the origins of the Christian testament without being aware of that testimony. The Q (*Quelle* = German for *source*) theory says that in the existing canonical Christian gospels there lies a body of sayings (a "*logia*") which was available to some of the authors of these gospels who then embellished them with other traditional stories, and agendas of their

own and those of their particular communities, and to appeal to a certain audience. But this article is not about Q and the work of Q scholars. But what is interesting is that our ancient account seems to support some of their ideas.

The other writings of the Christian testament do not seem to be considered worthy of discussion, ignored, or perhaps unknown to *actual* followers of Yeshua. And like their modern descendants in faith, Paul of Tarsus is considered as an evil corrupter of Yeshua's teachings, meaning, and movement, and rejected from being an apostle at all. What follows is the ebionite account on the origin on the Christian gospels.

### Some statements about Yeshua

(69b) 'All this is opposed to Christ's prayer. He used in his prayer utterances and words of God (found) in the Torah and in David's Psalms and used in their prayers before him and in his time by the prophets of the children of Israel. These Christian sects (on the other hand) utter in their prayers words sung for them by those whom they consider as saints. And they utter them according to a mode of lamentation or of song. And they say: this is the liturgy of such and 'such (a person), naming those who composed it.'

The Ebionites are currently working a siddur but one of the guiding principles is that our liturgy is drawn directly from scripture, particularly the Psalms (Tehillim). That liturgy is not intended to be sung, and this was always the plan before we had knowledge of this document. We felt from the beginning that liturgy should be simple and accessible to all. We have the same philosophy concerning the reading of Torah, reading rather than chanting it.

(70a) 'He said: I come to you. For this reason I shall act in accordance with the Torah and the precepts of the prophets who were before me. I did not come to diminish, but, on the contrary, to complete (*mutammiman,* or make fully operational). In truth, as far as God is concerned, it is more easy for the heaven to fall upon the earth than to take away anything from the Law of Moses. Whoever diminishes anything in it shall be called diminished.'

(52b) 'I shall not judge men, nor call them to account for their actions. He who has sent me will settle this with them.'

This flies in the face of Christianity which assigns a divine position for Yeshua as judge, and more.

(92a) 'You will come to me on the day of resurrection, and the inhabitants of the earth shall be led towards me. And they will stand on my right (hand) and on my left. And I shall say to those who are on my left (hand): "I was hungry, and you did not give me to eat; I was naked, and you did not clothe me; I was ill, and you did not feed (or nurse) me; I was imprisoned, and you did not visit me." And they will answer, saying to me: "Our master: When were you ill, or naked, or hungry or imprisoned? Did we not prophesy in your name, treat the sick in your name, and make the infirm stand up in your name? We give to eat to the hungry, and clothe the naked in your name. And we eat and drink in your name." (Then) I shall say to them: "You mentioned my name, but you did not bear true witness with regard to me. Remove yourself far from me, you that are wretched through sin." Then I shall say to those who are on my right (hand): "Come here, O righteous ones, towards the pity of God and towards eternal life. No one (will) be there, who had given to eat, had clothed and treated the sick, had eaten or had drunk in the name of the anointed one."'

Here Yeshua is not a judge, but one considered chief among the righteous in the judgement. Acts of mercy and righteousness are the way to stand before God, while Yeshua is not interested in the unrighteous mentioning his name or doing things in his name! He is concerned with humane actions of those obedient toGod.

(71a) 'After him, his disciples were with the Jews and the Children of Israel in the latter's synagogues and observed the prayers and the feasts of (the Jews) in the same place as the latter. (However) there was a disagreement between them and the Jews with regard to the anointed one.

The Romans reigned over them (I.e., the Jews). The Christians (used to) complain to the Romans about the Jews, showed them their own weakness and appealed to their pity. And the Romans did pity them. This (used) to happen frequently. And the Romans said to the Christians: "Between us and the Jews there is a pact which (obliges us) not to change their religious laws. But if you would abandon their laws and separate yourselves from them, praying as we do (while facing) the East, eating (the things) we eat, and regarding as permissible that which we consider as such, we should help you and make you powerful, and the Jews would find no way (to harm you). On the contrary, you would be more powerful than they."

The "Christians" and "Christ" (*al-masiḥ*) is the usage of Abd al-Jabbar and not the source. Muslims do refer to Yeshua in many places as the "messiah" without imparting the Christian view of it. I translate *anointed one* to show the proper Jewish perspective. The "Christians" in this excerpt refers to messianic gentiles, possibly either converting or contemplating conversion, or simply attracted to Yeshua as another savior (among many saviors popular among gentiles who were very susceptible to savior mysteries and cults of the time) and Yeshuine Jews before the split supported by Paul of Tarsus to invent what became Christianity. The Jews here speaks of Yeshuines still following the Torah according to Yeshuine teaching. Praying toward the rising sun was a pagan practice, but Ebionites were criticized for praying toward Jerusalem as if it were "the House of God." The Torah was also a great sticking point (especially circumcision) to Romans and later Christians that made Jews allegedly at enmity with all mankind.

The Christians answered: "We will do this." (And the Romans) said: "Go, fetch your companions, and bring your Document." (The Christians) went to their companions, informed them of (what had taken place) between them and the Romans and said to them: "Bring the Gospel, and stand up so that we should go to them." But these (companions) said to them: "You have done ill. We are not permitted (to let) the Romans pollute the Gospel.

(71b) In giving a favourable answer to the Romans, you have accordingly departed from the religion. We are (therefore) no longer permitted to associate with you; on the contrary, we are obliged to declare that there is nothing in common between us and you;" and they prevented their (taking possession of) the Gospel or gaining access to it. In consequence a violent quarrel (broke out) between (the two groups). Those (mentioned in the first place) went back to the Romans and said to them: "Help us against these companions of ours before (helping us) against the Jews, and take away from them on our behalf our Document." Thereupon (the companions of whom they had spoken) fled the country.

Here we have a description of gentile messianics wanting to usurp the Yeshuines *which did happen*. This is why modern scholars must discuss a non-existant Q document and have to work through textual criticism to recreate it. It was rescued from the Romans and the Christians and taken by Yeshuines fleeing them. We have accounts in the rabbinic *Toldot Yeshu* that describe Peter (actually Paul) who was employed by Jews to confound the Jewish religion and remove Yeshuines from it. There are other reasons to suspect that the Herodian thug Paul was a Roman agent involved in the scheme described by our account. Already, according to the account, there was a faction which was differentiating itself from the Yeshuines, before the "gospels" of Christianity were written, and so it is not unlikely that there was a reason for this developing fissure. We know from Christian scholars that Paul's letters preceded the canonical gospels Christians use. Weren't these communiqués and tracts in the form of epistles a means of disrupting the work started by Yeshua and giving gentile messianics reason to ally with Rome against all Jews? The Romans had good sense to stop the anti-imperial, anti-Roman, anti-rich, anti-authority movement of Yeshua. Messianics offered a savior cult capable of "doping" Roman subjects away from earthly utopian dreams (in a world which Romans, collaborators, and a retainer class had already carved up for themselves) toward illusions of heavenly reward. But these messianic fellows spoken of here, perhaps including Paul, were the elite who saw an opportunity in obtaining Roman favor and support. And in time such a Christian elite would grow more powerful, rich, and fatter than the Romans ever imagined possible.

And the Romans wrote concerning them to their governors in the districts of Mosul and in the Jazirat al-'Arab. Accordingly, a search was made for them; some were caught and burned, others were killed.

This is the region that Paul traveled to according to Acts in order to hunt Yeshuines as an agent of the Herodians (who were close collaborators with Rome). Ebionites were able to stay in the area of Mosul in modern day Iraq for centuries, safe after they had been persecuted out of existence as heretics elsewhere by the Church. Whether the account speaks of men like Paul as agents during Paul's day or later as anti-Yeshuine forces grew we cannot be sure.

(As for) those who had given a favourable answer to the Romans they came together and took counsel as to how to replace the Gospel, seeing that it was lost to them. (Thus) the opinion that a Gospel should be composed was established among them. They said: "the Torah (consists) only of (narratives concerning) the births of the prophets and of the histories of their lives. We are going to construct a Gospel according to this (pattern).

Everyone among us is going to call to mind that which he remembers of the words of the Gospel and of (the things) about which the Yeshuines talked among themselves (when speaking) of Christ." Accordingly, some people wrote a Gospel. After (them) came others (who) wrote (another) Gospel. (In this manner) a certain number of Gospels were written. (However) a great part of what was (contained) in the original was missing in them. There were among them (men), one after another, who knew many things that were contained in the true Gospel, but with a view to establishing their dominion, they refrained from communicating them.

According to them there were eighty Gospels. However, their (number) constantly diminished and became less, until (only) four Gospels were left which are due to four individuals. Every one of them composed in his time a Gospel. Then another came after him, saw that (the Gospel composed by his predecessor) was imperfect, and composed another which according to him was more correct, nearer to correction than the Gospel of the others.

Then there is not among these a Gospel (written) in the language of the anointed one, which was spoken by him and his companions, namely the Hebrew language, which is that of Abraham, the Friend of God and of the other prophets, (the language) which was spoken by them and in which the Books of God were revealed to them and to the other Children of Israel, and in which God addressed them.

(For) they have abandoned (this language). Learned men said to them: "Community of Christians, give up the Hebrew language, which is the language of Christ and the prophets (who were) before him, peace be upon them, (72a) and (adopt) other languages." Thus there is no Christian who (in observing) a religious obligation recites these Gospels in the Hebrew language: he does not do so out of ruse (using) a stratagem, in order to avoid (public) shame.

Therefore people said to them: The giving-up (the language) occurred because your first masters aimed at deception in their writings using such stratagems as quotations from counterfeit authorities in the lies which they composed, and concealing these stratagems. They did this because they sought to obtain domination. For at that time the Hebrews were people of the Book and men of knowledge. Accordingly, these individuals altered the language or rather gave it up altogether, in order that the men of knowledge should not grasp quickly their teaching and their objectives. (For if they had done so these individuals) would have been disgraced before having been (able) to consolidate their teaching and their (objectives) would not have been fulfilled.

Accordingly, they gave up (Hebrew and took up) numerous other languages which had not been spoken by [Yeshu`a] and his companions. (Those who speak these languages) are not people of the Book and have no knowledge concerning God's books and commandments. Such were the Romans (*al-Rum*), the Syrians, the Persians, the Armenians and other foreigners. This was done by means of deception and ruse by this small group of people who (wanted) to hide their infamy and to reach the goal of their wishes in their aspiration for dominion (which was to be won) through (the instrumentality of) religion.

If this were not so they would have used the language of Abraham, of his children and of Christ, through whom the edifice had been constructed and to whom the books had been revealed. In establishing a proof (meant) for the Children of Israel and the unbelievers among the Jews it would have been better that a call be made to them in their own tongue and a discussion engaged with them in their language, which they would not have been able to refuse. Know this; it is a great principle.

Know--may God have mercy upon you--that these three sects do not believe that God revealed to [Yeshu`a] in one way or another a Gospel or a book. Rather, according to them, Christ created the prophets, revealed to them the books and sent to them angels.

However, they have with them Gospels composed by four individuals, each one of whom wrote a Gospel. After (one of them) came (another) who was not satisfied with (his predecessor's) Gospel and held that his own Gospel was better. (These Gospels) agree in certain places and disagree (72b) in others; in some of them (there are passages) which are not (found) in the other.

There are tales concerning people—men and women—from among the Jews, the Romans, and other (nations, who) said this and did that. There are many absurdities, (many) false and stupid things and many obvious lies and manifest contradictions. It was this which people have thoroughly studied and set apart. However, a person who reads it becomes aware of this if he examines it carefully. Something—but little—of the sayings, the precepts of [Yeshu`a] and information concerning him is also to be found there.

As for the four Gospels: one of them was composed by John (*Yuhanna*) and another by Matthew. Then, after these two came Mark (*M.r.q.s.*) who was not satisfied with their two Gospels. Then, after these came Luke (*Luqa*), who was not satisfied with these Evangels and composed (still) another one. Each one of them was of the opinion that the man who had composed a Gospel before him, had given a correct account of (certain) things and had distorted others, and that another (Gospel) would be more deserving of recognition and more correct. For if his predecessor had succeeded in giving a correct account, there would have been no need for him to compose another, different from that of his predecessor.

None of these four Gospels is a commentary upon another (Gospel); (it is not a case of) someone who coming after (someone else) comments upon his predecessor's book, giving first an account of what the latter had said, and then (proposing) a commentary. Know this: (he who composed a Gospel) did this, because another man had fallen short of success (at his task).

These (Christian) sects are of the opinion that these four (Evangelists) were companions and disciples of Christ. But they do not know, having no information (on the subject), who they were. On this (point) they can (merely) make a claim. For Luke mentions in his Gospel that he had never seen Christ. Addressing (the man) for whom he composed his Gospel—he is the last of the four (Evangelists)—he says: "I knew your desire of good, of knowledge and of instruction, and I composed this Gospel because I knew this and because I was close to those who had served and seen the Word." Thus he says clearly in the first place that he did not see the Word—they signify by this word Christ; thereupon he claims to have seen people) who had seen Christ. But his having seen them is a (mere) assertion (on his part). If he had been someone deserving of trust, he would not have—in view of the (kind of) information (which was at his disposal)—composed anything at all. In spite of this he mentions that his Gospel is preferable to those of the others.

(73a) If the Christians would consider these things, they would know that the Gospels which are with them are of no profit to them, and that the knowledge claimed (on their behalf) by their masters and the authors (of these Gospels) is not (found) in them, and that on this point) things are just as we have said---it is a well-known (fact) which is referred to here (namely the fact that they have abandoned the religion of [Yeshu`a] and turned towards) the religious doctrines of the Romans, prizing and (seeking to obtain) in haste the profits which could be derived from their domination and their riches.'

(95a) 'Know... that these Christian sects are the most ignorant people in the world with regard to Christ, his history and that of his mother and that everyone among the authors of these Gospels learnt whatever he has written only a long time after [Yeshu`a] and after the death of his companions from (people) who lacked knowledge and were ill-informed.'

(70a) 'He and his companions behaved constantly in this manner, until he left this world. He said to his companions: "Act as you have seen me act, instruct people in accordance with instructions I have given you, and be for them what I have been for you." His companions behaved constantly in this manner and in accordance with this. And so did

those who (came) after the first generation of his companions, and (also) those who came long after (the second generation). Then they began to make changes and alterations, (to introduce) innovations into the religion, to seek dominion, to make friends with people by (indulging) their passions, to (try) to circumvent the Jews and to satisfy the anger (which) they (felt) against the latter, even if (in doing so) they (had) to abandon the religion. This is clear from the Gospels which are with them and to which they refer and from their book, known as the *Book of Praxeis* (Acts). It is (written) there: A group of Christians left Jerusalem and came to Antioch and other towns of Syria. They called upon the people (to obey) the law of the Torah, to forbid offering sacrifices to those who have not the necessary qualifications (to practice) circumcision, to observe the Sabbath, to prohibit pork and other things (forbidden) by the Torah. These things were regarded as burdensome by the Gentiles and they took little notice (of the exhortations). Thereupon, the Christians of Jerusalem forgathered to take counsel as to the stratagems which were to be employed with regard to the Gentiles in order (to make) the latter respond and obey them. They were of the opinion that it was necessary to mix with the Gentiles, to make them concessions, to descend to (the level of) their erroneous beliefs, to eat (a portion) of the sacrifices they offer, to adopt their customs and to approve of their way (of life). And they composed a book on this.

The book "they composed on this" possibly refers to the Christian book of Hebrews. The latter portion of the excerpts are mixed with Abd al-Jabbar's own comments and observations and this last comment could be speaking of a Christian book on liturgical practices. It could even refer to the Christian Eucharist. After all his work sought to establish true Islam against Christian and heretical Muslim beliefs and practices.

But elsewhere in this work Abd al-Jabbar describes Yeshuine /Ebionite viewpoints and practices that have little to do with Islam nor do they support the Islamic religion. For example, Islam calls Yeshua *al-masiḥ*, or the Messiah. Yeshua was a messiah only in a limited definition without any divine characteristics—because messiahs are not divine. Islam holds that Yeshua was the product of virginal birth which is not the belief of the Yeshuines Abd al-Jabbar writes about, nor was it the belief of ancient or modern Ebionites. Muslims are practitioners of Torah only partially, and coincidentally not imitating Jews, while our Yeshuines here are fully observant even in regard to ritual purity. Islam clearly differentiates between Jews and Christians but al-Jabbar clearly sees a distinction between Yeshuine Jews and (rabbinic) Jews and the conflict they had as Jews. This is not a typically Muslim observation. It could only be informed by those who knew firsthand about this infra-Jewish conflict. Islam also holds that Yeshua was not really crucified (Qur'an 4.157), and in his account al-Jabbar inserts a comment about this, yet we do not know if these Yeshuines held the belief (*docetism*). So while some of al-Jabbar's personal Muslim views can be seen, he also reports authentic Yeshuine /Ebionite belief and practice. But also we have a very straightforward account of how and why the Christian gospels came to be, while they are painstakingly reconstructed by scholars.

Knowing now how the gospels came about, the type of person Paul was, and the history of Christianity's nature, we too must carefully reconstruct what Yeshua said, as a Jew professing no other religion, and according to what his Jewish followers have left to us in witnesses such as found in the accounts of Abd al-Jabbar.

We have been asked many times, "Which books of the New Testament do Ebionites accept?" The answer is none. The account in the Tathbit provides the reason we cannot accept any of the Christian writings without great suspicion and testing. And none have been found uncorrupted in the manner our account describes. Then how can we have any information about Yeshua and his teachings? The account explains this also. There are pearls trodden over by the swine remaining even in the Christian gospels in spite of their efforts to obscure and bury them.

From the book *Jesus without Idolatry*, by Shemayah Phillips

# Yeshua Anointed

*9* And it came to pass, in those days, that Yeshua came from Natzaret of the Galil, and was immersed into the Yarden by Yahḥanan;

*10* And, straightway, as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rending asunder, and, the spirit, as a dove, descending unto him;

*11* and a voice *came* out of the heavens—Thou, art my Son, with whom I am very pleased [*today I have begotten you.*]

## Teaching and Notes

**Parallels**: Mt 3.13-17 // Mk 1.9-11 // Lu 3.21, 22 // Jo 1.31-34 [Q3]

**Notes:**

Mk. 1.9-11. D, it, Justin, Clement, Augustine, Origen, *GE*, *GH* =Jerome *Against Pelagius* 3.2; *Commentary on Isaiah* 2.2

### Anointed

Although this is another midrashic passage, it is important for Ebionite belief. Yeshua received empowerment, that is, Yahweh adopted him. It contrasts with the reading from Matthew, "*my beloved, my chosen*" and is derived from among logion attributed to the Ebionites by Epiphanius (*Panarion* 30.13.7-8) but long before by Origen and others cited. It follows Psalm 2.7 referring to King David. Priests, kings, prophets, all with a special "calling" were anointed with oil, and those perceived to have such a prophetic reform message were considered anointed (each being what Christians would call a *christ*). Such people were considered inspired, that is, empowered by God to bring about His Purpose. The prophets presumed routinely to speak in Yahweh's name with authority just as claimed for Yeshua (e.g., *kōh ʾamār yhwh*: 1Sa 15.2, Is 7.7, Jer 2.5, Ezk 2.4, Am 1.9, Ob 1.1, Mi 2.3, et alia). Being anointed was not a singular entitlement, nor did it recognize anything but a human who was aided by God. Ebionites have always believed this, and nothing more. This is brought to bear by the Christian, Hippolytus (c. 170-235):

> "The Ebionaeans, however, acknowledge that the world was made by Him Who is in reality God, but they propound legends concerning the Christ similarly with Cerinthus and Carpocrates. They live conformably to the customs of the Jews, alleging that they are justified according to the law, and saying that Jesus was justified by fulfilling the law. And therefore it was, (according to the Ebionaeans,) that (the Savior) was named (the) Christ of God and Jesus, since not one of the rest (of mankind) had observed completely the law. For if even any other had fulfilled the commandments (contained) in the law, he would have been that Christ. And the (Ebionaeans allege) that they themselves also, when in like manner they fulfill (the law), are able to become Christs; for they assert that our Lord Himself was a man in a like sense with all (the rest of the human family)."
>
> -*Against All Heresies, 7.22*

The words "Christ" and "Christs" here are being understood according to Christian doctrine, and so it seems incredulous to

Hippolytus that there could be *many Christs* or that any man had the ability to be one. His doctrine demands that *Christ* must be singular, unique. He confuses other points as well trying to insert some of his own beliefs.

As *māšîʿaḥ*, or *messiah*, just means *anointed* in Hebrew, as discussed elsewhere, we all have the ability to be anointed, but no man can be God. We see Yeshua's anointing serving the purpose of promoting an obtainable goal—the Torah is not far from us or too difficult, according to scripture—achieved by a human being, mortal in every way as God has created all mankind. Hippolytus can only understand *salvation* in an otherworldly, mystery religion way; thus, he holds that Jewish observance of the Torah is for obtaining an otherwordly salvation. Consequently, he sets Yeshua's anointing as related to his law observance in the minds of Ebionites. Since Hippolytus conceives Yeshua as occupying only a divine position, he can see Yeshua as the only anointed one able to meet the standard he then projects on Ebionites (and Jews in general). To him, only Yeshua is able to *perfectly* keep "the Law." Yet, those described in the Bible, as being anointed, did not necessarily keep the Torah perfectly, and that, in fact, was not the standard that established their anointed state. Yeshua broke his own command concerning anger, and became ritually unclean (Mt 9.20; 21.12). Yeshua's anointing is based on his prophetic message similar to that of other prophets before him. As a prophet, Yeshua the prophet was not required to be perfect, nor did prophets carry a salvific power. Their role was to bring repentance to God and His Torah, to maintain covenant. The goal of the Torah observant Yahwist is not to become God.

## "Jesus" Does Not Save

The idea of *māšîaḥ*, being anointed, has nothing to do with a *savior from sins* as taught by Christianity. For Christians, salvation is an act of liberation from damnation after death, and immunity from demonic forces that rule this cosmos, and thus evil world. Salvation is a result of a *gnosis*—a mysterious secret revealed to an initiate who believes it—that Jesus is the cosmic savior who vanquishes all the demons of the cosmos and their influence. This type of salvation indirectly goes all the way back to ancient Egyptian religion as found in the Book of the Dead which reveals magical instructions to prepare an initiate to cross into a blessed afterlife. Through the knowledge, including secret names and other mysterious spells and hymns, he will be able to favorably sway Osiris and 42 other deities at his judgement in spite of his sins during life. But Simone Pétrement convincingly argues that the ideas proposed by the Gnostic sects came from the Christian religion (Pétrement: 1984).

### The Biblical "Savior"

The biblical idea of salvation is different, indeed. Sin comes from acting in a way that disregards the Torah, even rejecting it. Although individual Israelites might transgress the Torah, the persons most associated with sin are gentiles who disregard or reject God's Torah individually and corporately. Salvation is the state of liberation from the effects and power of sinners, particularly the gentile nations as a whole. According to Luke 18.32, Yeshua described his own fate to be delivered up to the gentiles and be mistreated and killed. These were the "sinners" described elsewhere (Mr 14.41; Mt 26.45). So rather than Yahwists subjected to power of sin championed by gentiles, in the Reign of God ushered in by the Messiah the gentiles would be broken, subjugated to the rule of God—the Torah—or else destroyed. Christians will be part of those gentile peoples whom God's People will be saved *from* according to ideas of God's Reign and Messianic accomplishments.

> Isa 11:10 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.
>
> *–JPS 1917*

The Christian *AV* gives the word "*Gentiles*" here for *goyim*, which it translates so often as *nations*. (The *AV* often translates *goyim* as *heathen* when gentiles are described in negative terms, yet this word means *nations*, *gentiles*, with little exception referring to non-Israelite *non-Yahwists*. *Goy* can mean nation generally.) The *AV* word choice "gentiles" is made to remove Jews and misrepresent them from the verse in order to bring a Jesus/gentiles relationship into the prophecy. But the parallel to this

verse can be found in the Psalms:

2.1 Why are the nations in an uproar? And why do the peoples mutter in vain?
2 The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, against [YHWH], and against His anointed:
3 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'
4 He that sitteth in heaven laugheth, the Lord hath them in derision.
5 Then will He speak unto them in His wrath, and affright them in His sore displeasure:
6 'Truly it is I that have established My king upon Zion, My holy mountain.'
7 I will tell of the decree: [YHWH] said unto me: 'Thou art My son, this day have I begotten thee.
8 Ask of Me, and I will give the nations [*goyim*, AV gives *heathen*] for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession.
9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'
10 Now therefore, O ye kings, be wise; be admonished, ye judges of the earth.
11 Serve [YHWH] with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
12 Do homage in purity, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way, when suddenly His wrath is kindled. Happy are all they that take refuge in Him.

*–JPS 1917*

Christians are familiar perhaps with verse 7, but above is the entire context. David and the Davidic kings are the adopted sons of God, anointed and enthroned Jewish kings. The Davidic kings of the tribe of Judah are each from the root of *Yishay* (Jesse), David's father, and one will bring a rod of iron to subdue the nations of the world, just as David subdued gentile peoples neighboring his kingdom. Gentiles are not the good guys in this psalm. But those who submit to Yahwism (not Christianity), that is, "serve Yahweh," will share in Israel's happiness. The measure of Israel's kings was the Torah, and not arbitrary rule. The rod Yeshua was given, according to the gospel (Mt 27.29-30), was a reed, fragile and flimsy, rather than an iron rod, in order to mock his claim of kingship. Yeshua was a good man, and would have perhaps made a good king (if he had been qualified, *see below*), but he did not crush the gentiles. In fact, they crushed him, mocked his kingship both as Romans and as the Church, and coopted his teachings to mock the rule of a righteous king based on God's Torah. The Messiah will crush the gentiles into submission, and shatter them like pottery. And here it is evident that the Messiah will not save the gentiles, but he will provide sufficient threat to those who will not live justly in submission to the Torah rule of Israel's God. Some gentiles will be drawn to God, even eunuchs who observe the Shabbat and will join Israel:

1 Thus, saith Yahweh, Observe ye justice, And execute righteousness,—For near, is My salvation, to come in, and My righteousness to be revealed.

2 How happy the frail man, who doeth this! Yea the son of the earth-born who firmly graspeth it! Keeping the sabbath lest he profane it, and Keeping his own hand from doing any wrong.

3 And let not the son of the foreigner, who hath joined himself unto Yahweh, speak, saying, Yahweh, will separate, me from his people, Neither let the eunuch, say, Lo! I, am a tree dried up! 4 For thus, saith Yahweh—Of the eunuchs, Who shall keep my sabbaths, And choose what I delight in,—And lay firm hold on my covenant, 5 That I will give unto them—In my house, And within my walls, A sign and a name, better than sons and daughters,—A name age-abiding, will I give him, which shall not be cut off.

6 And, as for the sons of the foreigner—Who have joined themselves unto Yahweh To wait upon him, and To love the name of Yahweh, To become his for servants,—Every one who keepeth the sabbath, lest he profane it. And who, layeth firm hold on my covenant, 7 Surely I will bring them into my holy mountain And make them joyful in my house of prayer, Their ascending-offerings and their sacrifices, being accepted upon mine altar,—For, my house, a house of prayer, shall be called, for all the peoples! 8 Declareth My Lord, Yahweh, Who is gathering the outcasts of Israel:—Yet others, will I gather unto him Besides his own gathered ones.

*-Isaiah 56*

**The Davidic Line**

There are descendants of David among Jews today. The line did not die out. But according to Scripture, one branch was disqualified from providing future kings (and consequently messiahs). We know from Scripture that the line came through *Shlomoh* (Solomon). God says to David:

> 2Sa 7.12 When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be to him for a father, and he shall be to Me for a son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; 15 but My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever.'

Not all of David's descendants were good men, and Jeconiah (*Yᵊḵōnyāh* also called Coniah /*Kōnyāhw* /*Konyahu*, and Jehoiachin / *Yāhwᵊyāqîn* /*Yehoyaqin*) the son Jehoiakim was cursed:

> Jer 22.24 As I live, Declareth Yahweh,—Even though Coniah son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet-ring upon my right hand, yet, from thence, would I pull thee off; 25 and I would give thee into the hand of them who seek thy life and into the hand of them from the face of whom, thou dost shrink in fear,—even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans; 26 and I will hurl thee out and thy mother who bare thee, upon another land where ye were not born,—and, there, shall ye die. 27 But unto the land whither they shall be lifting up their souls to return, thither, shall they not return. 28 An earthen vessel to be despised thrown about, is this man Coniah? Or an instrument, in which is no pleasure? Wherefore are they to be cast out, he and his seed, and to be thrown forth upon a land which they have not known? 29 O land, land, land! Hear thou the word of Yahweh!
>
> 30 Thus, saith Yahweh,—Register ye this man, childless, A man who shall not prosper in his days,—For there shall prosper of his seed No man sitting upon the throne of David, or ruling any more over Judah.

The line of Davidic kingship forever dies at Jeconiah's branch. Yet, according to the gospel genealogy of Jesus, he is descended from David through Jeconiah through Joseph! Thus, if the gospel account is accurate, Jesus was invalidated of serving as king; otherwise, this account is garbled information in Christian writings, and it means Christian scripture is erroneous in either case. To appeal to Miryam /Mary as Jesus' only human parent only further undermines the claim to Davidic kingship, and we have to ask why anyone would bother even supplying this genealogy. Psalm 2 and all other passages of scripture, which speak of the Messiah as Davidic king, cannot be talking about Jesus, the descendant of Jeconiah. The genealogy continues along Jeconiah's line of well-known descendants like *Zerubavel* (Zerubbabel, Zorobabel). If we accept the Christian witness, another Jew will become the Messiah according to God's word.

**An Anointed King?**

Was Yeshua anointed as a king of the Jews? This is not completely improbable if his genealogy is incorrect. If true, the genealogy and information in it disqualifying Yeshua due to his relation to Jeconiah may have been unknown during his life. (This is unlikely.)

It is more likely that the genealogy is flawed and followers of Yeshua saw him as a valid candidate as King of the Jews. The account of a "transfiguration" on Mount Hermon may well be a transfigured story of a ritual coronation (Mt 17, Mr 9). The account of the woman anointing Yeshua's head with spikenard in Jerusalem could be another disguised account of royal anointing (Mr 14). This would make Yeshua an anointed prophet-king. Yet if the genealogy of Matthew is true, it might explain why Yeshua failed—God foretold that no descendant of Jeconiah (Coniah) would rule as His king (Jer 22.24 ff.) But if Yeshua was of Davidic lineage, but bypassing Jeconiah, more sense could be made of the notice of accusation "The King of the Jews" placed by

the Romans on Yeshua's cross. Yeshua would be charged for sedition as a rival king to Rome and its puppet, Herod. It would explain his entry in Jerusalem as a king, and also why the people abandoned him when the Romans made their powerplay to suppress their king.

But for the moment let us suppose that the Jeconiah genealogy of the gospel is correct. We will consider how Christians try to explain away the cursed line of Jeconiah.

Some Christian missionaries try to argue out of the curse of Yeshua's ancestor with Talmudic literature (which Ebionites do not hold to be authoritative for belief). They claim that in Babylon God reversed Jeconiah's curse.

> R. Johanan said: Exile atones for everything, for it is written, Thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah. Whereas after he [the king] was exiled, it is written, And the sons of Jechoniah, — the same is Assir — Shealtiel his son etc. [He was called] Assir, because his mother conceived him in prison. Shealtiel, because God did not plant him in the way that others are planted. We know by tradition that a woman cannot conceive in a standing position. [Note 33: I Ch. III, 17. Notwithstanding the curse that he should be childless and not prosper, after being exiled he was forgiven.]
>
> *-Gemara to Sanhedrin37b*

Here is a source to which Yoḥanan could be referring:

> When Nebuchadnezzar came to have marital intercourse with [[Jeconiah's wife]], she said to him: 'You are king. Is not Jeconiah, too, a king? You desire your sexual satisfaction. Does not Jeconiah, too, desire his sexual satisfaction?' Nebuchadnezzar thereupon ordered that Jeconiah be given his wife. And how did they lower her [into the dungeon] to him? R. Shabbethai said: They lowered her down to him over the bars, whilst the Rabbis said: They opened the ceiling and let her down to him. When he was about to have marital intercourse with her, she said to him: 'I have seen a discharge the colour of a red lily,' and he then withdrew from her, and she went away and counted [the seven days of separation] and observed the ritual of purification and of immersion. The Holy One, blessed be He, then said: ' In Jerusalem you did not observe the precept relating to issues, but now you are fulfilling it,' as it is said, *As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I send forth thy prisoners out of the pit* (Zech. IX, 11) [which means], You have remembered the blood at Sinai, [[Ex. XXIV, 5-8]] and for this do *'I send forth thy prisoners '*. R. Shabbethai said: He [Jeconiah] did not move thence before the Holy One, blessed be He, pardoned him all his sins. Referring to this occasion Scripture has said: *Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no blemish in thee* (S.S. IV, 7). A Heavenly Voice went forth and said to them: *'Return, ye backsliding children, I will heal your backslidings'* (Jer. III, 22).
>
> *-Leviticus Rabbah 19.6*

The entire point made by Rabbi Yoḥanan in the Talmud *Gemara* is that *Exile atones for everything* (all sins). For one of his examples, he uses a tale known to the *Leviticus Rabbah*, a paraphrase and commentary containing folk lore, of how Jeconiah avoided sex with his menstruating wife (which is a sin of defilement) while he was imprisoned in Babylon, in effect, repenting of the type of pagan behavior he once engaged in. Because of this, the tale goes, God forgave him in his exile.

Zerubavel, a descendant of Jeconiah, also named as the ancestor of Yeshua in Matthew, served as a leader along with Yeshua the priest in Jerusalem among returnees from Babylon freed by the Persian king, Cyrus (Qoresh /Kurash whom Isaiah calls God's "messiah" and shepherd). Zerubavel is beloved, and influential in the restored community and instrumental in organizing the rebuilding of the Temple, but is never king, and afterwards he disappears into obscurity. Zerubavel still seems to be considered a messianic figure in later rabbinic commentary. Targum Jonathan associates the "great mountain" of Zechariah 4.7 with an oppressive empire and enemy of Messiah (Levey, p. 98), but strangely later the enemy becomes the Messiah and descendant of

Zerubavel:

> It is written, Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubavel thou shalt become a plain (Zech. 4:7). What does it mean, Who art thou, O great mountain? This is King Messiah. And why does he call him great mountain? Because he is greater than the Fathers … loftier than Abraham … more elevated than Moses … and higher than the ministering angels…. And from whom will he issue? From Zerubavel….
>
> *-Midrash Tanḥuma, Buber ed. (in Patai: 1979, p. 41)*

So from sources later than the eighth century (such as *Pirqe deRabbi Eliezer* 9, and *Yalkut Shimoni* that follow this reasoning also) we find this odd, conflicting opinion. It appears that rabbinic materials do not always witness a consistent view with scripture or with each other and can change arbitrarily over time.

Using non-biblical sources of information (from literature Christians also reject when need be), they claim that Yeshua is now free of the curse. But to use the argument in *Leviticus Rabbah* also destroys the Christian argument of Jesus as blood atonement. In other words, as Yoḥanan says, the Exile in Babylon atoned for all sins (which were many in Jeconiah's case as described in the same Talmudic sources)—therefore, nobody needs Jesus as a human sacrifice. Yet another type of "atonement" is introduced not requiring blood. Later, the idea of a means of atonement through martyrs was popular. In addition, the Christians do not accept the authority of the Rabbis and the Talmud—but here, hypocritically, they accept its veracity in order to save Jesus from the curse of Jeconiah. We are not told anywhere that God restored a right to rule to Jeconiah's descendents.

**Yeshua the Priest?**

Neither was Yeshua a priest because he was not of the tribe of Levi. Perhaps this is the reason that he was called a priest after the order of Malki-tsedeq (*Melchizedec*) (Gen 14.18; Heb 7). Hebrews dwells on the concept that Yeshua is like the gentile priest of El Elyon, and quotes Psalm 110 as prophecy to support this supposed priesthood.

> 1 To David. A Melody. The declaration of Yahweh to my lord—Sit thou at my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 2 Thy sceptre of strength, will Yahweh extend out of Zion, Tread thou down, in the midst of thy foes. 3 Thy people, will freely offer themselves, in the day of thine army,—in the splendours of holiness, out of the womb of the dawn, To thee, *shall spring forth* the dew of thy youth. 4 Yahweh, hath sworn—and will not repent, Thou, *shalt be* a priest unto times age-abiding, after the manner of Melchizedek. 5 My lord, on thy right hand,—hath shattered—in the day of his anger—kings; 6 He will judge among the nations—full of dead bodies! He hath shattered the head over a land far extended: 7 Of the torrent in the way, will he drink;—For this cause, will he lift up *his* head.

The writer of this psalm extolling David says that his lord (David) will be enthroned at Yahweh's right hand, and this is nothing unusual in language about David. David is called Yahweh's son (Ps 2), and here the writer calls him "my lord" (literally, utterance of Yahweh to my lord *-nᵊʾum yhwh laʾḏōnî*). The confusion of the Christian writings (Mt 22.44; Mr 12.36; Lu 20.42; Ac 2.34) does not exist in the Bible's Hebrew text, nor does Psalm 110 indicate anyone ascending to heaven.

Why is David called a priest after the manner of Malki-tsedeq? We assume that Malki-tsedeq was a gentile; however, David was of the tribe of Judah, and not Levi, and therefore unqualified to be a priest according to God's law. Calling him a priest like Malki-tsedeq is a roundabout way of excusing his priest-like privileges regarding the Tabernacle (2Sa 7.18-29// 1 Ch 17.16). One curious passage might be construed to mean that David acted as a priest in blessing the people:

> 2Sa 6.17 So they brought in the ark of Yahweh, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tent which David had stretched out for it,—and David caused to go up ascending-sacrifices before Yahweh, and peace-offerings. 18 And, when David had finished offering up the ascending-sacrifice and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of hosts.

Yet it is clear that the priests held the position to handle the holy furniture (for example, Uzzah died for handling the *Aron* 2Sa 6.6). Perhaps the language is figurative.

But nowhere do the Christian gospels tell us that Yeshua entered into the sanctuary, and he did not accomplish the feats described in Psalm 110; yet, David was a conqueror. Malki-tsedeq did not have the Tabernacle of God to officiate in, and he was not a priest in the covenant sense, nor was he worshipped. Yet Avraham did make a tithe to him, after this priest of a Canaanite god (evidently 'El, the head of the Canaanite pantheon) gave him bread and wine and later blessed him (Gen 14.18-19; Cross: 1997, pp. 44-75; Albright: 1967, pp. 188, 232).

So we see that Malki-tsedeq, David, and figuratively Yeshua were all humans who acted as priests outside the covenant provisions set by God for the priesthood. In choosing a gentile priest of a god whose name can be taken to mean, "the Highest God," was the Christian writer of *Hebrews* deliberately finding a suitable abstraction of the biblical God that gentiles could acknowledge without being strapped with God as the God of Israel? A God and cult separate from "Jewish" revelation and non-biblical covenant was being created for Christianity. One author claims that Christianity is in fact looking back to a pre-monotheistic Canaanite type religion that had non-Levitical Yahwistic priests, kings as embodiments of God, God ascending in human form, Yahweh as a lesser god and eventually an angel, and finally Jesus as the great angel and lesser Yahweh (Barker: 1992). This would only further show that Christianity, following such ideas, is utterly pagan as were those who apostacized from Yahwism in Israel.

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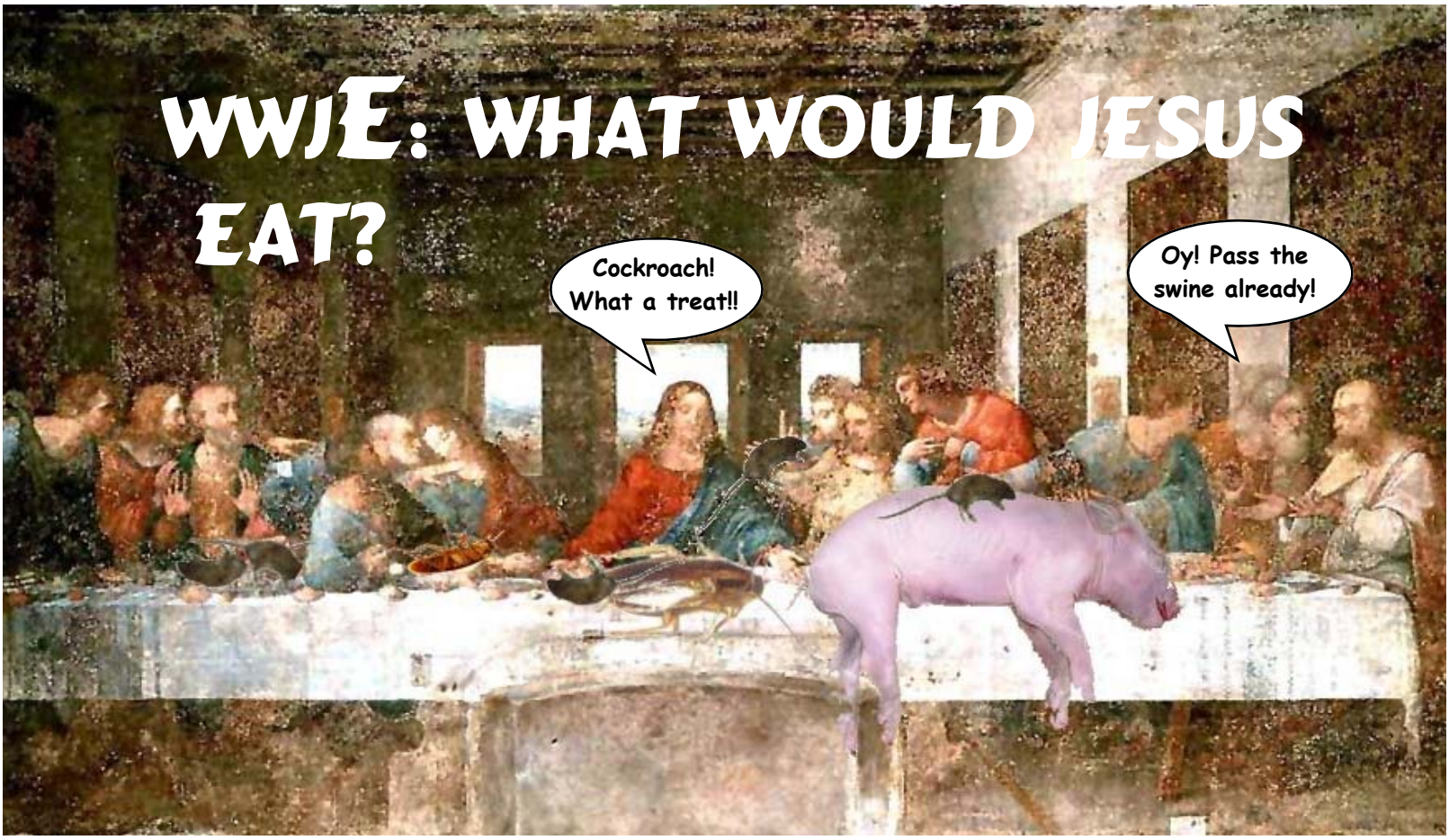



In the creation story of Bereishiyt ("Genesis") we are told the world and everything in it is good. Elohim says it was *kî ṭôḇ*, according to what He intended. There are no mistakes or creatures purposely created as evil. Later we are told of a creature called a *nāḥāš* that has a mind of its own and questions the woman to stir her free will to question God's instructions to the man. (This brings up a subject unto itself—the woman was not given the command, but must have received it orally from her mate rather than directly from God!)

What we wish to point out here is that every creature is here deliberately according to biblical thought and has its place. Secondly, even though we may not understand its place, perhaps due to our own lack of information and perspective, God does and there seems to always be consequences when we "outvote" Him. Our own ignorance and willfulness usually brings a consequence sooner or later which we did not have the obedience, faith, or forethought to foresee. And lastly, animals were not created instilled with a spiritual evilness or defectively.

So what shall we do when, according to our own scripture, tells us that certain creatures are improper to eat as food? Originally, animals were not created to be our food. We, mankind, were first given vegetation that seeded to reproduce (with their seed within them), also according to the biblical story of creation. Gan Eden was a produce stand rather than a butcher shop. But this changed because man did not show the wherewithal to maintain the paradise and had to learn the hard way to appreciate what God had intended for mankind.

We are not told specifically that animals had the same natures toward each other—that is, if there were predators and carnivores, for example, in the beginning. The creation as an ecosystem probably required this from the beginning, and only man as caretaker would stand over them perhaps immune from attack. Perhaps all creatures were herbivores. We see this as the ideal scenario when mankind chooses to embrace a utopian world under the rule of God. Then children can play with poisonous snakes, wolves lie down with lambs, and bears and lions eat grass with

cattle (Isa. 11). (This could be only figurative language.) Nevertheless, man was placed on a lower level like a predatory animal, ill-suited for life in the wild until protected with the furry skins of their animal prey. Was this because a suggestion from an animal had been more regarded than Yahweh's command?

It is our own free will that can raise us to the station that Yahweh intended for us. Are we partners in creation with God or are we free agents working for our own imaginations? He does not force us to follow His direction, and we are free to go against the creation we are placed within. We can live as animals or humans. We are living in creation as it was meant to be and mankind is rejecting its intended position in that creation because the world rejects God's Instructions to us. Ebionites are seeking *tiqqun `olam*, a restoration of creation as it was meant to be, and the only tool we have to achieve that is God's Torah (Instruction). Yet the world seems intent on listening to any creature that tells it that its own desires and authority ranks with God's.

Other religions are hell-bent on rejecting God's commandments and accepting any authority but His. They would rather listen to whispering snakes who question His Torah and Authority. They replace the clear consequences of death with foolish and torture filled myths of their own to construct a false authority over a world of fools. And by ignoring God's Purpose and thus failing to see there is one, we continue to wander endlessly barred from paradise.

In His mercy, even as man chooses to live like animals, He made allowances for us to eat animals—with restrictions. Vegetarianism, as some claim, is not the way back to paradise. Mankind lost paradise due to his stupidity and stubbornness in discounting God's instruction to him. The Instruction of God is the way back, and a state where mankind can become vegetarian again will be a result of *tiqqun `olam*. Until then, we have a program and process to wean us from ourselves, and our apparent desire to destroy the creation of which we have cheated ourselves.

> 2 Speak ye unto the sons of Israel, saying,—These, are the living things which ye may eat, of all the beasts which are upon the earth: 3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven–footed, and cheweth the cud, among beasts, that, may ye eat….9 these, may ye eat, of all that are in the waters,—all that have fins and scales, in the waters, in the seas and in the rivers, them, may ye eat….21 Nevertheless, these, may ye eat, of all creeping things that fly, that go on all–fours,—such as have legs above their feet, to leap therewith, upon the earth—22 these of them, may ye eat: the swarming–locust after its kind, and the devouring locust after its kind,—and the chargol–locust after its kind, and the chagab–locust after its kind.
>
> -Leviticus 11

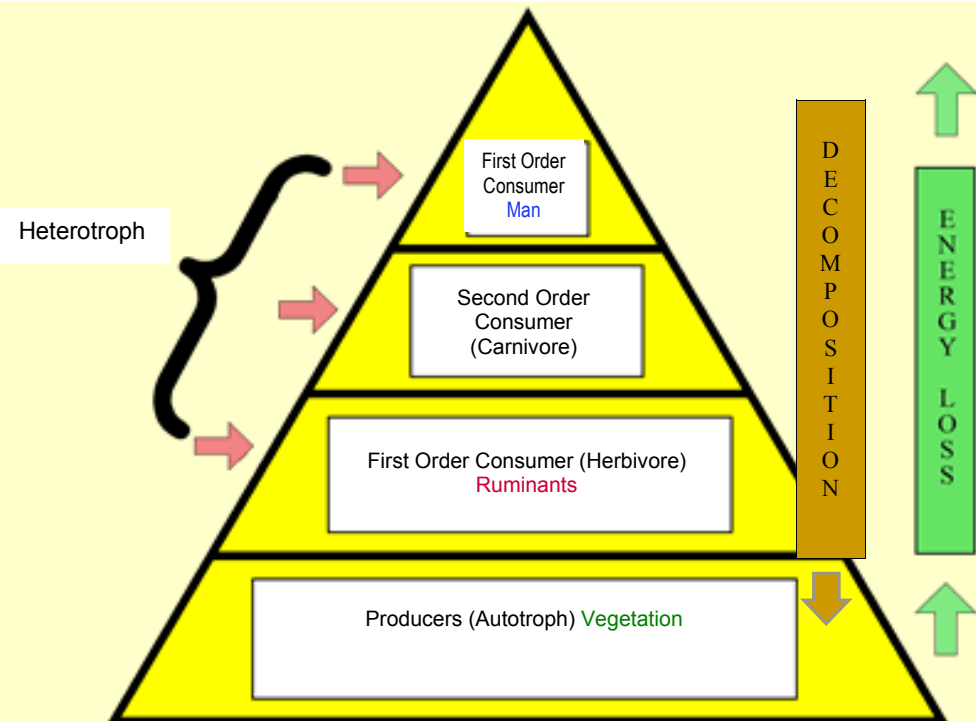
Also we are told we may eat birds other than those listed as prohibited to us. Our chief food sources from the animal world are: antelope, deer, and bovine creatures with a stomach that processes grasses, that is creatures known as ruminants; we are allowed to eat fish with scales and fins only; and we may eat certain grasshopper type insects.

Unfortunately, unconcerned with the biblical and ecological context, some people see this list in a negative way. Why? Because they want no limitations as they consume anything they can get their hands on. It strongly reflects their natures, and attitude toward creation driven by a total disregard for anything but their gut and insatiable appetites.

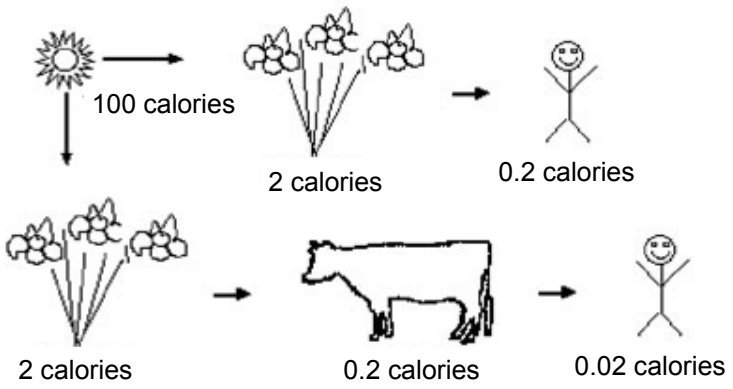
Is there a purpose to humans being limited to predominantly animals that feed on vegetation? Man was once vegetarian according to scriptural teaching. If we look at this ecologically, there is an interesting factor to consider. Many of us remember the "Food Chain" or "cycle" from life science taught at school.

The food chain goes something like this: plants provide the most energy as a food source and consumes sunlight and fully decomposed nutrients. Herbivores (plant eaters) feed upon these plants. Carnivores (flesh eaters) feed upon herbivores and other carnivores. There is waste and remains of dead animals which is consumed and further broken down by scavengers and decomposers like flies and insects. When dead animals are completely returned as decomposed nutrients in the soil, they feed plants which are eaten by the herbivores and the cycle continues. In the food laws of the Bible, dead animals, things that feed on dead flesh, and flesh eaters make up the majority if not

totality of food barred from human consumption. Nature has a system, and the Torah seems to acknowledge it, showing that even those who care little about God or Torah must surely see the sense of it.




There are more herbivores than carnivores, and eating herbivores poses less likelihood of wiping out another species by using it as a food source. Of course, our fascination with killing animals for no apparent reason is another subject regarding the endangerment of species. We have a hard time not endangering the human species. Would this problem exist under rule of God's Torah?




Decomposers and scavengers have a very important role, but not as a source of human food. They can eat the filth, the diseased, and the dead unfit for human consumption. In turn they die and go on to be scavenged or to plant food. Each level of the chain obtains fewer calories of energy than the the level below. If man gets food from the herbivores they obtain more energy than from carnivores/ scavengers. Technically, more calories are provided by vegetation overall. Sunlight provides the greatest source of energy, and vegetation is able to absorb the most energy from it. Did the followers of God's Torah know this all along? Whether they did or not, they accepted the concept through the Torah. We believe that God limits mankind to eat only certain animals to protect creation and its proper functioning. Scavengers are here to work rather than be eaten as food by humans.

One of those followers of God, the Jew Yeshua accepted the Torah as eternal truth that would not ever be put aside. He also denigrated those who would not teach the truth of Torah. Christians tend to slander Yeshua into a Torah hating fool along the lines of their own Torah hating culture and its unbridled appetites to consume and destroy people, the earth, and creation. They flail desperately to support ignorance of Yahwism and Judaism in order to create a God hating god in Yeshua.

They will show their ignorance of Jewish opinions on ritual purity in Yeshua's day to say he taught that it did not

matter what people ate because it became feces anyway. It did not occur to them with their dirty hands perhaps stained with feces that Yeshua was speaking of ceremonial hand washing and not suggesting that people should reach their nasty, filthy hands into the dinner platter to fish out some hog meat. But even so, if gentiles were correct, we should listen to God rather than Yeshua if Yeshua chose to disobey God's Torah.

Then they point to Keyfa being given a voice from heaven in a vision—against God—to eat unclean food—when the meaning of the vision is clearly explained to accept (unclean) gentiles for conversion to the Jewish Faith. Gee, why didn't Yeshua explain this personally to Keyfa about food—considering it would have been a total rejection of God's commandments! Something stinks here.

And then the snake returns to whisper his lies against God. "You won't die. Forget the consequences of this earth and disobedience. Follow me against God to heaven free from restriction and your body of the clay from which God fashioned you. This world of God won't last, so who cares. Eat it, destroy it."

> 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. 15 But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 22 Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. 23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.
> –Christian writing of *Romans* 14

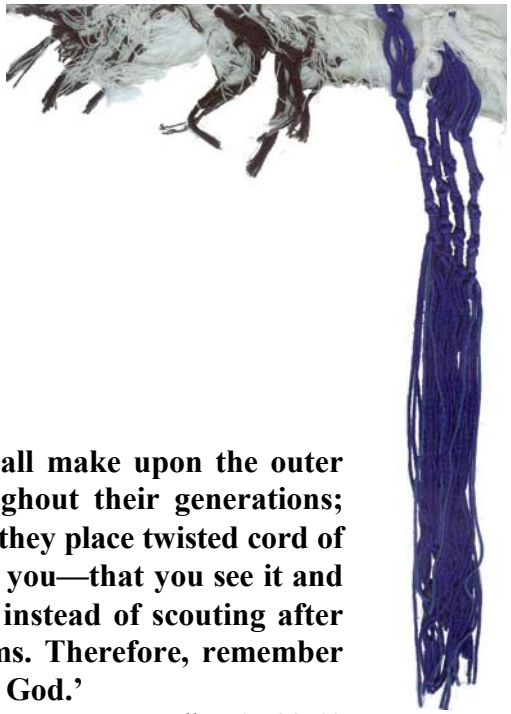
Paul attacks scripture as being meaningless superstitions. All things are *pure*? (And God is a liar?) But since he tells his followers (the Christians) not to offend their "brother" who is burdened by his belief in God's commandments, then this whole discourse is meaningless. His audience should have repented at once in order not to offend those who heeded God's food laws rather than Paul. If we can assume that these were Jewish followers of Yeshua, Yeshua was evidently not at all clear to them that they should abandon God's commandments. It is Paul, not Yeshua who makes new laws to replace those given by God. If a man walked into a Christian church today telling of a vision from heaven (like Paul did) telling people that God suggested eating feces, he would be considered a babbling lunatic by all except those who had a taste for feces. This would also be the case for a man telling Jews the things Paul did concerning God's food laws. That's why he didn't fare well with sane Jews.

Swine and other such animals are created to eat *tame'* (things improper for human use) and thus clean the world of refuse, carrion and diseased carcasses. They are "good"—but only for the purpose to which they were created. The same people who historically have had a cultural propensity to desire unclean meat also have had desires for other things God restricts from humans. They often long for sex with other men, children, relatives, and even animals. If they can disregard a commandment, it's easy to disregard the rest of what God prohibits. Paul of Tarsus went to such people of little regard for God's commandments. He did not help them to learn of God and repent and turn around toward paradise. But instead he reserved his condemnation for those who obeyed God's Torah. To this day if you refuse to eat what God does not allow, the Christian followers of Paul laugh you as they cling to a religion that mocks everything God has commanded! To them this behavior is holiness.

We believe God and that what He tells us in His Torah is the only authoritative answer for mankind. We believe Yeshua was good, not the evil man portrayed by Christianity or the god in Paul's disturbed hallucinations and anti-God instruction. We want to restore the paradise, not consume and destroy anything and everything we please.

# Pᵊṯîl Tᵊḵēleṯ

## The Cord of Blue



**Speak to the sons of Yisra'el and tell them: They shall make upon the outer edges** (*kanpê*) **of their garments a fringe** (*ṣîṣîṯ*) **throughout their generations; and at the fringe's outer edge** (*ʿal-ṣîṣîṯ hakkānāp*) **shall they place twisted cord of sky-blue** (*pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ*)**. 'And such shall the fringe be to you—that you see it and remember all the commandments YHWH made you instead of scouting after your own heart or after your own eyes to whoredoms. Therefore, remember and do all My commandments, and be sacred for your God.'**

-*Bamidbar* 15:38-40

**Plaited cords** (*gᵊḏilîm*) **you shall make yourselves upon the four outermost edges of your mantles with which you cover yourselves.**

-*Devarim* 22:12

When you search out a store that supplies the item spoken of above, what do you ask for? We ask for *tzit-tzit* (*tzeet-tzeet*), don't we? What color do we get? What is *tekheilet*? What do we do with this once we get it? What does the *miṣwāh* (commandment) actually tell us is required?

You may find a fair amount of variation and confusion in making or ordering "tzit-tzit." We will try to get to the bottom of our requirement and provide some history as well as some technique and style.

The parts of the commandment have been combined as one in the minds of most people and this is clearly revealed just by using the term *tzit-tzit* (or *tsit-tsit*, *tsitsiyoth*, etc.), which does not really refer to the strings we tie for the corners of a *tallit* (*tal-**leet*** "prayer shawl"), *tallit qatan* /*kanafot arba* (a small "poncho" like garment worn under a shirt) or even a *qefiyya* /scarf (!). We are confusing the fringe with the actual cords that are tied.

These cords are called a *pᵊṯîl* in Numbers and *gᵊḏilîm* in Deuteronomy, and both words probably mean the same thing. A *pᵊṯîl* is what the seal Yehudah gives Tamar as a token is strung on (Ge. 38:18). It also is what is used, worked in a woven or macramé band, to fasten the kohen's breastplate to his ephod as well as around his

Qaraite tallit and tallit bag. Jewish Encyclopedia.

More recent Qaraite chain style "tzit-tzit." Karaite-Korner.org.

turban (Ex. 28:28, 37; 39:21, 31). In other words there is not a single *pᵊṯîl* but a skillfully executed work of blue cord.

In Bamidbar 19:15 a wrapping cord is spoken of to be used to secure a cover over open vessels to guard against contamination. In Shoftim 16:9, Shimshon breaks new leather thongs as if they were *pᵊṯîl-hannᵊʿōreṯ*, cords of "tow" (tow is an old word describing loose twists of raw flax fiber often used to start a fire). Finally, Yeḥizq'el sees a man measuring with a reed and a line of linen cord (*pᵊṯîl pištîm*), that is, a line made of more finely prepared flax fiber cords or threads (Eze. 40:3). A *pᵊṯîl* means threads that have been twisted, tied or woven (from *pāṯal*). From the uses we describe in the text of the Bible, it does not mean something simply twisted into a thread, but a more deliberate work, woven or tied to assemble a stronger or ornate item of cordage. The old KJV's "ribband of blue" is not necessarily off the mark (Nu. 15:38).

Devarim's *gᵊḏilîm* have been rendered "chains" by some, but this is unlikely. Instead it is a synonym for what is described in Bamidbar. Based on cognate languages, Gesenius says it means *intertwined threads*, *a twisted work* based on a root *gāḏal* which means *to wrestle*, or *twist or twine a cord*. The cognate Syriac word means *plaited locks* (of hair), and the Arabic word means a *plaited rein of* leather *thongs*. Some of you may have never heard of "plaiting your hair" as perhaps in the way a grandmother in the American South still speaks of braiding their granddaughter's hair. There is no disagreement between the two instances in the Torah describing the commandment to wear a work of blue cords in the corners of our garments. Perhaps the reason for the two different words lie in the dating for the composition of the two books.

The belief that *gᵊḏilîm* refers to a work of "chains" for their "tzit-tzit" comes from a misunderstanding of 1Ki 7:17 in the description of column decorations. But it is most likely referring to something intricately intertwined. In fact, an earlier example of tallit from that type of Judaism show that the chain style now used is very recent.

What many of us today call a "tzit-tzit" is not that at all. The ritually tied macramé cords are the *pᵊṯîl*. Separate from the *pᵊṯîl* is the *ṣîṣîṯ*. The *ṣîṣîṯ* is the edges or fringe of the garment. The word *ṣîṣîṯ* describes a ruffled edge of a bird's wing or a flower's petals or even the uneven lengths of hair (Eze. 8:3). The passage commanding the blue *pᵊṯîl* in garments attached to fringe at the corners, describes the fringed edge as a *kānāp̄*, a word that also is used for a wing. Anyone who works with a piece of material knows it is woven and leaves a rough end at top and bottom, in other words, a fringe. We are not buying tzit-tzit for our tallits; instead, we are seeking a *pᵊṯîl* for the four corners of our garment. But we do know by reading the commandment informed that the *pᵊṯîl* was dyed a type of blue color; however, the entire *pᵊṯîl* was blue, not just a few cords of it! This is against the opinions of the sages Hillel and Shammai in the Talmud (*Menaḥot* 41b). The *pᵊṯîl* is the most important item we are studying.

We cannot be sure what configuration the *pᵊṯîl* took, or changes in style over time. But there are examples. An actual example of the *pᵊṯîl* has been found at the Cave of Letters, and corroborates the finding of the *pᵊṯîl* being entirely blue (*tᵊḵēleṯ*). The *pᵊṯîl* is described as a deliberate work, perhaps creative, whether a work of macramé, or a

tassel. We can see the use of tassels among Arabic headgear today. Also fringes could be ornate as shown from ancient examples from the Near East. Some include tassels on the kilts of Mycenaean warriors (fringes) and the related Sea Peoples some of whom appear to have three tasseled cords attached to their kilts. Fringes can be seen from Canaanite and Babylonian depictions, and something similar to a *pᵊṯîl* may be shown on some Babylonian examples.

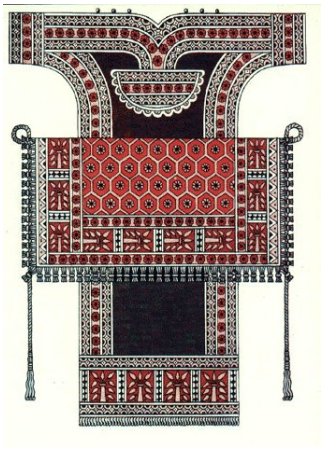
The subject of *tᵊḵēleṯ* has been controversial indeed. What was *tᵊḵēleṯ*? What is so significant for this color? And why do most Jews today use white strings for a *pᵊṯîl*?

The color of *tᵊḵēleṯ* has been described as sapphire-blue, the color of the sky and sea, (Babylonian Talmud *Menaḥot* 43b, *Ḥullin* 89a, *Sota* 17a; Jerusalem Talmud *Brakhot* , chapter 1, halakha 2; *Sifre Bamidbar* 15-38; Midrash Rabba Numbers *Naso* 14:3; Midrash Rabba Numbers *Shlaḥ* 17:5; Midrash Psalms 24:9 and 90:10; and *Yalkut Shimoni* on Psalm 90.) The Septuagint renders *tᵊḵēleṯ* as à"64<2@H, or blue. Saadia of Babylon (9th century) said it was the color of the clear sky. Its importance is crucial as this is the color used for various priestly garments and accessories. Jews today anticipating and preparing to build the third Temple are looking for the authentic source of this dye.

According to the rabbis, there is confusion as to its source. We have stories of its scarcity, and of a single family with the secret of this dye, or that the recipe was lost. This is suggested as the reason for its astronomical price, only a few threads being used, and finally use of all white cords for the *pᵊṯîl* instead of a *pᵊṯîl* entirely of *tᵊḵēleṯ*. But there are other factors. The dye produced on the Levantine Coast gave the names Phoenicia and Canaan (Kena'an) to the area, both meaning "purple dye." Its rarity making it very expensive gave the dye the name royal purple (or royal blue). Control of the area was fought over by empires including Rome. It became a crime for anyone but Romans of the highest rank to wear "purple" in the first century. Yet in spite of any alleged scarcity, the dye was still obtainable for centuries afterward.

Government prohibition is most likely the real reason. We do know that a monopoly was maintained in the Talmud and that all other blue dyes were deemed unfit fakes. Still the only example of ancient *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* material has been found in the hideout of freedom fighter Bar Kokhba and it is dyed with something other than the alleged recipe of the royal purple. In fact, Yigal Yadin (1971: p. 84) mentions that the owner of the material must have been duped based on BT *Menaḥot* 42b: "There is no manner for testing *tᵊḵēleṯ*; it should therefore be bought only from an expert." But the material found is not blue, or sky-blue as described by later rabbis, but clearly purple. It was found to be dyed with indigo and carminic acid derived from an insect. (Why would the material be more purple than blue when *tᵊḵēleṯ* was blue easily achieved with indigo? Indigo can also produce shades of reddish purple to dark blue.) The rabbis would also say: "It is I Who will exact vengeance from him who attached to his garments cords dyed with indigo and maintains that it is *tᵊḵēleṯ*" (TB Baba Metzia 61b).

This gives reason to believe that the owner knew where it came from or perhaps cared anything about the rabbinic opinion. Perhaps the rabbinic opinion was not universally



Does this ancient Babylonian garment (ca. 1050 BCE) feature like a "tzit-tzit"? Notice the fringe and tasseled cords.

A *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* from the Cave of Letters at Nahal Hever. (Yadin, 1971)

Yarn to make the *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* also from the Cave of Letters.

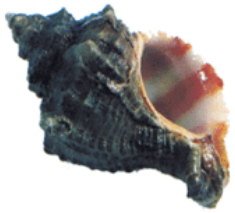
A piece of a vat once used for dying Tyrian Purple found at Tel Shikmona.

accepted by Jews, especially when there is confusion in the rabbinic sources and a lack of a true test for authenticity.

According to the rabbis, *tᵊḵēleṯ* came only from an animal called a *ḥillazon* (or, *ḥalzun*). Where do we find one? Was it on the seacoast of Phoenicia or only the territory of Zevulun (*Shabbat* 26a; *Megilah* 6a)? Or was it found on the mountains (*Sanhedrin* 91a)? Or was it found in the Sea of Galilee (according to the much later *Zohar*, on Shmot, parasha Beshallaḥ, and Wayyiqra, parasha Beha'aloteka)? The Talmud (*Soṭaḥ* 46b) also says *tᵊḵēleṯ* was dyed at the city of Luz (Beth El). Yet according to one source the Jerusalem Talmud describes the animal as *porphiron* which the Greeks and Romans called sea snails of the *Murex* family. Ancient scholars also speak about the process of creating dye from snails apparently with accuracy. Ancient piles of shells from several species have been excavated in the area of Tel Keisan, Tel Shikmona, and Tel Dor. But if we are talking about a sea creature, particularly a sea snail like the *Murex trunculus*, then why was a source of *tᵊḵēleṯ* found on mountains? Maybe the mountains of shells from the snails at dye works were confused for snails on mountains. Perhaps not.

A cuttlefish

In more recent times efforts have been made to rediscover the ancient process that had been lost in the 15th century. At one point Rabbi Gershon Henokh Leiner of Radzyn was convinced that *tᵊḵēleṯ* was derived from the cuttlefish (*Sepia officianalis*) and thousands used it after he set up a factory to produce dye. But another substance (metal filings and chemical salts) in the recipe was actually completely responsible for the color obtained. But not all accepted the Radzyner Rabbi's conclusions. Still this dye was produced and used for over a hundred years. Rabbi Barukh Lipshuets during the same time period wrote in *Kupat Ha'Rokhlim* that any source that could produce a stable, long lasting blue dye was acceptable.



Murex trunculus shell

Several species of snail have been considered, *Murex brandaris*, *Murex trunculus*, and *Thais haemastoma*, although *Murex trunculus* does seem to be most likely. In 1909 a German chemist determined the agent creating the purples of these snails to be the compound *dibromoindigo* and was found in snails from other parts of the world also. Today there are many who believe that *Murex trunculus* is the true source of *tᵊḵēleṯ* and there is an organization in Israel producing the dye for ritual use and they document the technique well. On the other hand their snails, it is said, actually are imported from Spain. It must also be noted that one of the reasons that the Radzyn dye was rejected by many was that it was non-kosher, but this would also apply to snails which are unclean. The source of the dye in sea snails is in a tiny hypobranchial gland near the head, most likely discovered because they were edible). Indigo is a plant based dye. (But other dyes come from unclean sources like worms.)

Modern strings dyed by P'til Tekhelet in Israel

Many Jews today are using the dye produced in Israel by the Association for the Promotion and Distribution of Tekhelet. And perhaps *Murex trunculus* dye is the best candidate for the ancient *tᵊḵēleṯ* dye used.

> "The fame of Tyrian purple lives on in part because of its royal history. But its rarity is not the only reason. The rich, deep color it produces in cloth and its chemical stability are two other reasons. A deep purple color, with a hint of black, is the most difficult to obtain since the color depends on three variables: the

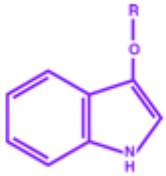
mollusk species, for how long the gland is dried, and the concentration of the dye on the fabric. This color is therefore the most prized (1, 2). The latter variation is most often reported with silk fabric, the color changing from a pale blue to a deep purple as the dye concentration increases (6). It is thought that this is a result from the van der Waals interaction of the bromine atoms with those in neighboring molecules. Facilitated by the planar nature of the molecule, which therefore allows the bromine atoms to lie closer together, a color more purple than blue results (6). This achieves a higher concentration on the fabric than is possible with indigo, which is structurally a non-brominated Tyrian purple. Once on the fabric, the dye is resistant to soap, alkali compounds and degradation from atmospheric oxygen, which means that it, unlike indigo, does not require a fixing agent to preserve the dyed fabric. As a solid, it is insoluble in most organic compounds. (Florence, et al.)

Typically tied rabbinic "tzit-tzit" using tekhelet according to various traditions. tekhelet.com.

The dye provided by the Tekhelet organization is evidently not as stable as that described above, and purchasers are warned that their "tzit-tzit" can bleed color on their garment. If you can afford it, buy it, but there are other concerns.

Dyers Woad

Here are those concerns: The dye from the organization is from a source that is ecologically limited. It takes many snails to produce a tiny amount of dye (an estimated 8,000 snails for one milliliter of dye, 16,000 for a gram); since Jews are to be a light to mankind, isn't there a possibility of an endless need from this limited source. It is possible that in ancient times these snails were "farmed" in pools, and this would need to be accomplished today to produce snails in the millions with immense waste. Does God hate this poor little snail or what? As other species of sea snail can provide the color, Latin Americans used *Purpura pansa* without killing the snail through a "milking" type procedure. Tyrian purple has also been synthesized in the laboratory.



Plant precursors:
woad: indican (indoxyl-glucopyranoside)
indigo: isatan B (indoxylxylulofuranosonal)

If the purple dye above is identical to *tᵊḵēleṯ*, it seems we should have some evidence of the word *tᵊḵēleṯ* in languages related to Hebrew. The TWOT (תכילת) says that there are Akkadian cognates for *tᵊḵēleṯ*. We looked for cognates in BDB, UT, and Harris (1936) unsuccessfully. The Bible uses both *tᵊḵēleṯ* and *argaman* as different colors or shades. But snail dye can produce shades from sea green to blue to purple and red (as can indigo). The exposure to daylight and the chemical process it creates produces the different shades. The next is cost; can a poor Jew afford it? Should we encourage another monopoly? The dye could be considered unclean. Does *tᵊḵēleṯ* refer to a specific dye source or to a color and can that be proven without any doubt? It cannot. The key to the expense and renown of the dye was most likely derived from the quality of the color which was hard to compare with for its intensity and rich hues.

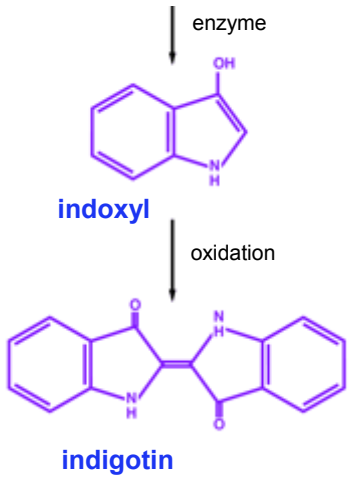
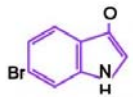



Diagram from Huxtable showing how woad and indigo becomes indigotin.

Was it the actual expense important in the biblical commandment, the color, or the perceived importance of the color?

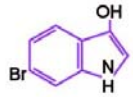
The source of blue is *indigotin* and it can be obtained from a number of sources and processes. Woad (what ancient Britons painted their faces with for battle), indigo (what your jeans blue), sea snails, and urine of humans suffering from porphyria are all sources of *indigotin*. R.J. Huxtable of the University of Arizona shows, among other interesting facts, that woad and indigo both become *indigotin*, i.e., blue, after

## Murex to Indigotin

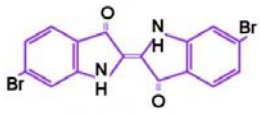



Mollusk precursor: bromoindoxyl

purpurase

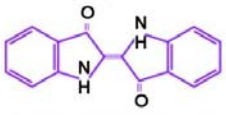



oxidation



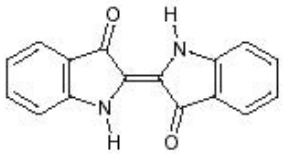

Tyrian purple

UV /sunlight




Indigotin (tekhelet /blue)

Indigo




enzymatic hydrolysis and oxidation. After oxidation and light, blue *indigotin* is also obtained from the sea snail substance. So the common factor is the same blue *indigotin* obtained from all of these diverse sources. The secrets of dyers were closely controlled and manipulated to create a high price. If ancient dyers in fact, as it seems from pools found from archaeological sites around the Mediterranean, also controlled mass breeding of the mollusks for dye, then what does this have to do with *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ*? The Torah describes a type of color, but not a prescribed process for obtaining the color. And if more than a particular snail (even in the Mediterranean) can produce that color as well as a variety of other sources, then why should it matter what the sources are?

Yet we are not given an option to we wear the *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* on our garment's corners, in spite of the abandonment of wearing such by rabbinic authorities who allowed a white *pᵊṯîl*.

In ancient times the *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* was a symbol to the world. The royal blue or purple was a sign denoting affluence and power worn by nobles and kings in societies of rank and privilege over commoners. In Israel it was also the color found on priestly garments, as already mentioned. What would incite the wrath of a pagan king, the pagan wealthy and ruling class? The color itself would possibly. And what would suffice to make the point that in Israel, under Yahweh as King, every son of Israel was equally under Him rather than other men? It was a radical political statement to the gentile nations. It could also signify that by wearing the same color as the priests, every Israelite was like a priest, part of a nation of priests. Even this could be politically significant as the priests were to Israel, Israel was to the world.

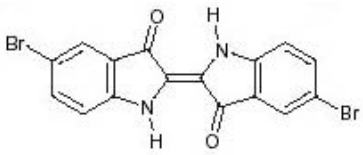
Milgrom also explains that wearing the *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* showed a carefully differentiated degree of holiness. The high priest wore the most blue, regular priests less, and every Israelite the *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ*. Also he claims that in those times regular clothing was made from linen (which would not absorb the dye well), and that wool could absorb the blue dye. By wearing a blue wool *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* or vestments the priests and Israelites was wearing items technically devoted to God as *šaᶜaṭnēz*. *šaᶜaṭnēz* describes forbidden mixtures whether seeds planted in the field, of wool and linen, or others (Milgrom: 1991, p. 548). Today we do not think of *šaᶜaṭnēz* as somehow a combination reserved to God, and most will tell you that if your tallit is wool you should not attach a "tzit-tzit" of cotton, or other plant derived material, and vice versa.

But there can be another interpretation. Should we let ourselves be envious of rich people who could have afforded such a precious dye. We do know that some Jews wore blue not derived from snail dye as shown by the purple material excavated at the Cave of Letters, and by this time the Romans controlled the dye industry and Jews in Palestine had been prohibited from wearing it, as well as most Romans. Wearing "blue" would have thus been a sign of defiance, not so much because of its scarcity or cost but because of what it stood for—the color that the God of Israel assigned to His priests and people, yet a priesthood, a people, and a Temple trodden underfoot by the gentiles.

With such an understanding and situation, we should not over concern ourselves with the source of blue dye or use it to create hardship or a type of tyranny or superiority

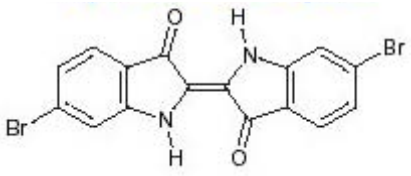
resultant from availability of a snail. If one wears *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* from a snail and one wears blue from indigo or other sources, will there be a perception of comparable worth or legitimacy toward one rather than the other? (Indigo was also a precious dye in ancient times.) We cannot support that. We should strongly consider an inexpensive, ecologically friendly, clean source for *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ*. Common cotton (or wool) string dyed with typical "royal blue" or a turquoise household dye, sky blue embroidery floss, or bunka cord should be considered. For those convinced of the necessity of this new blue now produced in Israel, it could be worn with other "threads" dyed blue with something other than *Murex trunculus* dye. And because we wear the entire *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* as blue a single cord dyed with that dye cannot be used as a means of status.

5,5' dibromoindigo




In conclusion, as they say, find your "strings" of blue or sky-blue, or dye them, buy them, then tie them (some instructions to follow) for the corners of a four cornered garment. This could be your tallit, a tallit qatan, or even a *qefiyya* (Middle Eastern scarf worn by men) like the black one the author uses. A *qefiyya* can also be made into a tallit qatan. The source of the color is indigotin and so any substance that provides it is useable. (See Milgrom's view on string material, above pg. 24.)

Tyrian purple




A tallit can be made of any material. It does not have to have stripes although most tallits sold have them. The more ancient color preference for the stripes may have been blue, and this color is making a "comeback." A tallit with sky-blue *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* and matching stripes would be very nice. Traditional tallits have black stripes, many S'fardi Jews prefer white stripes. But a tallit can be any color and without stripes.

Some people like to wear "clip-on tzit-tzit" and other inventive ideas, but these do not really satisfy the commandment. If you do not wear a garment with corners, then *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* does not apply. Do you need to let them show? The *pᵊṯîl tᵊḵēleṯ* is something for *you* to see in order to remember the commandments. In some cases it may not be proper to show them due to your surroundings.

**Sources:**

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# Tying the Cord of Blue

A typical rabbinic style ritual macramé consists of 7 equal lengths of string (36” +-) and one longer length (44” +-). (The lengths are estimates and you should check the appropriate lengths needed.) Rabbinic Jews permanently attach one to each corner, but you can make them detachable. Loop all 8 strings around something like a chair post, and even the ends up on one side so the wrapping string hangs down longer on the other side.

You see here how the wrapping string hangs down. Bring the right group over across the other to make a square knot. Make sure this knot is far enough down to allow it to clear the edge of your tallit and approximately double that length plus one finger width. (This is for a removable p‘tiyl. An attached one takes a group of 4 strings thru the hole with square knot below the tallit edge.) Tighten the square knot. Take the wrapping string to the right.

Begin wrapping the group of 7 strings with the long string holding the group in place consistently. You can wrap to the right, towards you and around the back at the left. When you get the desired number of “winds” and the string returns to the right side position, group the strings into 4 on each side and tie another square knot. You tighten the knot, and then repeat the procedure to wrap the string around the group of 7 strings again. Wrap the desired number of winds, and a square knot until you finish with the final square knot. Here is the finished product with the 7-8-11-13 design. (See next page.)

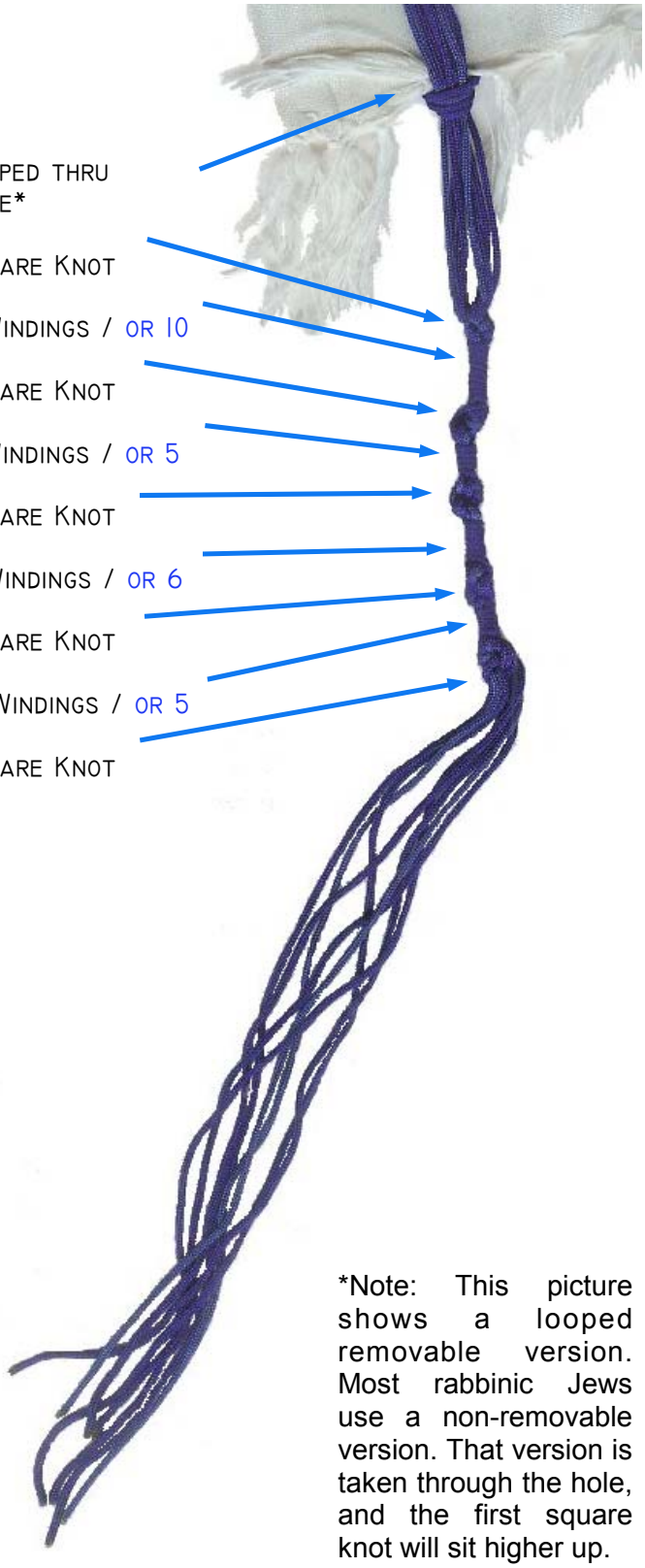
# Two Suggested Methods

Here are two rabbinic style tying methods. A simplified S'fardic style of windings is shown by blue text.

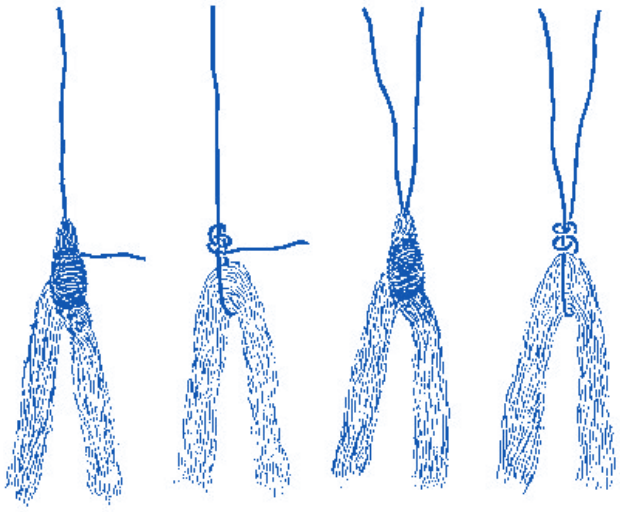
The windings of 7-8-11-13 has a meaning related to gematria. 7+8 gives 15, the equivalent of yod-heh (יה). 11 gives waw-heh (וה), while 13 gives the word *ʾeḥāḏ*, One alone. "YHWH alone."

The second method (shown in blue) of 10-5-6-5 spells out the Name YHWH through the number of each winding and its equivalent letter in Hebrew.

Additionally, the word tzit-tzit in Hebrew adds up to 600. There are 8 strings and 5 knots, or 13 together. Thus the whole unit makes up a work that is equivalent to 613, the traditional number of commandments in the Torah.




*Note: This picture shows a looped removable version. Most rabbinic Jews use a non-removable version. That version is taken through the hole, and the first square knot will sit higher up.



Here are several methods used to make the tassels such as found at the Cave of Letters (see pg. 21) with unspun yarn. It also reveals that in ancient times the entire work was of blue, supporting the Ebionite position.

## Let's Be Honest

# Was Yeshua Resurrected?

From the very beginning the resurrection of Yeshua has been doubted—even by Yeshuines.

> 1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11 Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.
>
> 12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14 **And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.** 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.
>
> 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. –1 *Corinthians* 15

Paul is speaking to his own followers, *trying to convince them* that Yeshua rose from the dead. Did they not believe him? Was the resurrection story something new being promoted by Paul? Aside from the theology, there are claims here unattested anywhere else. There is no record that he appeared to Ya`aqov (James) or 500 people. It seems nobody outside his little group and Paul of Tarsus is said to have seen him after his execution. The accounts of his

resurrection differ among the Christian gospels. They agree on very little concerning the crucifixion or the events of and after the resurrection. The earliest manuscripts of the earliest gospel, Mark, do not mention any appearances of Yeshua: all the appearances in that gospel occur only in post-4th century manuscripts (*The Greek New Testament*, 4th Revised Edition, p. 189, note 3), although it is hinted at in the late 2nd century, in a passage of Irenaeus, though the text in question is also a late manuscript that could have been modified to match the Gospel that was in circulation centuries later. It first appears in Coptic manuscripts, and is added to Greek versions a century or more after that. If we were to call these witnesses in a court of law, there would be perjury charges for each of these witnesses.

**Is the resurrection of Yeshua as fictitious as this painting?**

Paul claims he saw Yeshua in a vision, but he cannot seem to recall it the same way twice. In one account, he does not see Yeshua, only a flash of light, and those with him do not see Yeshua, but only hear him (Acts 9:3-5;7). But no one, not even Paul, saw Yeshua in the flesh here. Most importantly, Paul never says in his letters that he ever saw Yeshua in the flesh (he even denies it in Galatians 1). The vision in Acts has all the earmarks of something like a seizure-induced hallucination. Paul alone sees a flash of light, and he hears voices and goes blind for a short period. This is not a good case at all for a resurrection.

Maybe Paul did have a vision or more likely a seizure due to physical condition, stress, guilt, or simply the heat.

Paul obviously was teaching something other than Judaism and what Yeshua had taught. This is enough for him to be rejected by Ebionites. Some think he was trying to become the head of a new religion, others believe his ambitions toward love and prestige were thwarted by Jewish priests, while others agree that he was an agent of the Jewish priesthood. Some believe he was a Roman agent as well. The *Toldot Yeshu* (calling him Peter) claims he was deliberately leading gentiles away from Judaism.

There is much to the last scenario. Romans and Jewish collaborators concerned for Jews in general would benefit from Paul's anti-Torah, "don't rock the boat" teaching. Messianic Jewish political ideas were absolutely certain death for the Jewish people. They led to the destruction of Herod's Temple in CE 70. Indeed, Yeshua had been killed as a seditious threat to Rome.

By displacing their messianic motives to rebel, and creating a new Judaism more agreeable to the gentiles, open to all and thus uniting rather than dividing, and more submissive to outside authority by internalizing and spiritualizing religious faith, eliminating violent messianic emphasis on the Temple, and postponing material and social complaints by referring them to an afterlife the Romans would be satisfied. This could have been a deliberate or a subconscious motivator for Paul and his movement.

We do not believe Yeshua taught violence yet was not pro-Roman (or pro-gentile). By making a non-violent agent of change in Yeshua, yet seen as a candidate for Messiah by people who only saw a violent overthrow of Roman rule and gentile occupation as the only satisfactory solution, the voice of God through a vision, Paul might achieve a program to reverse an impending upheaval. This would be the "greater good" in the eyes of an agent of Jews or Romans. Josephus records the rising violent messianism rising from the twenties all the way to the war in the sixties. Then, Jerusalem was destroyed. Millions were enslaved or killed.

There are other reasons that Yeshua appealed to gentiles that will be discussed in another article. But in the gentile mind, resurrection and elevation to the heavens

was perfectly expected for a great king or luminary. Whether Paul declared Yeshua a god or not, by saying Yeshua had appeared to him after death it meant that he had been elevated to heaven. Consequently, Paul became the sole voice of a divine Yeshua.

From Abd al-Jabbar we learned that the Romans indeed had a hand in the gospels. With Paul as an agent, his authority had to be superimposed over the existing authority of Yeshua and the Yeshuine movement. By establishing a myth that Paul had been spoken to by Yeshua through a vision (or visions) after Yeshua's death this could be done easily especially among gentiles. It could also give an out to others who saw no hope in resisting Rome. Paul's writings preceded those of the gospels, and both Paul's version of Yeshua and his resurrection (in order to place him as a heavenly authority) were written into the later gospels.

It is also rather likely that the author of Acts is taking liberties with what Paul actually reported. This is a trace of the efforts to insert the Pauline position into the gospels. Acts tries to smooth over the fact that Paul was at odds with the authentic Yeshuines. This suspicion rises in force if we notice that when Paul gives us his own account in his own writings, we get an incompatible story: in particular, no mention of attendants, or Ananias. In Galatians 1:12, he flatly states that he did not receive the gospel from man, and that excludes Ananias or anyone else; he says there that he 'returned' to Damascus right away, but still does not mention Ananias. In fact, he would be contradicting himself if he did, since his point is that he did not speak to any Yeshuines after his vision, until three years later, and then only to Peter and James (Galatians 1:17-20), and did not return to Jerusalem with Barnabas to reveal his conversion and missionary activities to the church until fourteen years after that (Galatians 2:1-2). Nowhere in this account does he mention people being with him during his conversion. No one else is reported to have seen or heard or even been present when Paul had his vision. Since Paul's own writings are earlier and more authoritative concerning his own life than Acts, which was written by another man almost after Paul had been dead for some years, all the accounts given in Acts are highly suspect, especially any claims that others saw the same light as Paul.

Paul's teachings might have been way for him to save his people and the Romans to avoid a terrible war, by

teaching a non-violent submission to Rome, a concentration on inner rather than outer expressions of faith, and a displacement of present complaints by promising an accounting after death, and in an apocalypse, and the expansion of the faith beyond ethnic limits, which was already the secret to the success and acceptance of other Asian religions by Rome, such as that of Cybele and Isis. In doing this, he would succeed in removing those features of other popular messianic movements which were increasingly violent, and overtly divisive and offensive to the occupying power. But Paul's movement is not the religion or movement of Yeshua.

Yeshua, as a Jewish teacher, is not dependent of being sinless, a god, or being resurrected from the dead. He does not need the attributes of dying and rising gods so popular among the gentiles and evidently still popular among Christians in the resurrection myth today. Religion based on such myths is indeed in vain. Yeshua told his followers to keep his movement alive by doing what he taught them, not by depending on proclaiming him as this or that or resorting to wild tales suited to the old gentile gods.

We know about resurrection and (or) ascension to the heavens from paganism. The stars and heavenly bodies were held to be gods and ascended heroes, and finally

great men and rulers. In some ways saying that Yeshua ascended to heaven could be seen as a backhanded insult to Rome and its deified rulers. A peasant claimant to kingship (messiahship as king) in the hated province of Judaea, full of enemies of the Empire, has ascended to the heavens just as an emperor over the known world might? A deified Jew rising above the conqueror of the Jews? We will give homage to a crucified Jewish peasant rather than Rome? Such would be a highly subversive political statement.

Yeshua's acceptance among gentiles, as well as certain Jewish circles, could very possibly be a result of astral beliefs. His birth was at the time when Aries was at the center of the celestial sky near what was equated with the heavenly throne. Aries, the cosmic lamb also known by Jewish astrologers as *Tale'*, other Middle Eastern peoples, as well as Greeks and Romans, was the "leader and prince of constellations" (Nigidius Figulus) and shared similar titles among the ancients. Perhaps the entire corpus of apocalyptic sky visions are based on astrology as ancient astronomy (Malina: *Social Science Commentary on the Book of Revelation.* 2000, pp. 93-6, ff.). It is clear that seeing Yeshua's "star in the East" (Mt 2) is related to skygazing by ancient astrologers. The importance of such phenomena observed in ancient times as revelations of God, gods, and divine communication cannot be underestimated.

If the appearance of a heavenly body and constellation was tied to Yeshua then the cosmic lamb would be thought to have originated in heaven, and it is only natural that he would afterword ascend into heaven--even as foretold to be wounded by the heavens as Aries has a reverted headed (I.e., twisted backwards, looking over his shoulder)--to continue his rule in the heavens.

To the ancient astrologer-priests-mystics who were also bearers of secret knowledge and traditions, such phenomena were unquestionably real. Did Paul's "conversion" have to do with such a vision in the night of a blinding light? Was this *gnosis* in the night sky the thing that led him to a cosmic savior Yeshua /Aries while knowing next to nothing about the Jewish man Yeshua? Paul actually speaks cryptically of a man (himself) who traveled to the third heaven (2 Cor 12:2).

There is a connection as well between astral religious ideas and Gnosticism. The idea of the immortal soul probably came from India, but was especially promoted in the West by the Pythagoreans. They held that the soul originated in the heavenly realm, a "fiery principle, a particle of ether which lights the divine fires of heaven. This spark, which descended at birth in the body, which it heated and animated, reascended after death to the upper regions, whence it had come forth." (Cumont: *Afterlife in Roman Paganism*. 1922/1959, p. 97)

This is exactly the same belief in Gnosticism, and at the heart of all the ancient Eastern astral religions according to Cumont (pp. 98 ff.). By knowing the "truth" of such phenomena concerning the heavens and the soul, one gained the *gnosis* to obtain divinity and salvation from the world of matter (Cumont, p. 111 ff.). Thus we move from Yeshua, Yahwism, and Torah to Paul's rejection of all these in favor of a cosmic Christ and a faith devoid of "works" but based on *gnosis* and *mysteries* as the means of salvation. And like the Lamb who descended from the heavens, Paul's Yeshua had to re-ascend to them. This was Paul's gospel and it had to be superimposed over all other accounts of Yeshua.

By the time the Christian gospels and Acts came about (albeit containing authentic information of the Jew Yeshua and his counter-culture interpretations of Yahwism), these were used as a vehicle to promote the state of a gentile cult reflecting astral religion, gnosis, and post-Revolt, pro-Roman and anti-Jewish ideas. The conflicts found in the gospels and Acts clearly reflect a committee type approach and haphazard editing and supplementation.

The real victim of the gospels is truly Yeshua, but his murder is more the result of the Christian Church than the Jews or Romans. In its efforts to accommodate the greatest number of pagan converts by producing a astral cosmic Christ with the attendant mythology to support him, its hate of Jews, and its de-emphasis on the actual social justice and reform teachings of Yeshua by Christianity, Yeshua has not only been crucified again and again, but hacked to bits. Also they have rendered Yeshua's good teaching null and void as any serious student will quickly discover the pagan elements in the gospels and Christianity and perhaps as a result throw out Yeshua with the bath water.

The resurrection belief does not support a glorious Christ but mocks and damages the life of a good man.

# Passover פסח

## Ebionite Style

### How do Ebionites celebrate the Passover and the days of Unleavened Breads?

We celebrate biblical holy days according to a new moon crescent calendar. This means we usually calculate the approximate time and expected illumination of a tiny sliver of the moon visible with the naked eye in the sky over Israel. Then after it has been sighted, we consider that evening to begin the biblical month. In other words a biblical month is a new moon lunation. In ancient times, the moon was sighted and witnesses attested it, then a signal went out to inform Jews far and wide. Today we have the internet and other means of instant communication that allows us to be "next door."

The first biblical month begins in Spring (Ex 12) after the equinox and also attested by new ears of green barley. The old biblical name for this month was Aviv—"green ears." On the 14th day of that month at evening, as the sun dimmed until stars were seen (`*arbayim*), the lambs were sacrificed in the ancient Sanctuary and later Temple. As sun sets it is time to begin the age old meal of Passover. The only food required for this feast celebrated at home with family and friends is "bitter herbs" and *matza* (bread without leavening). Before the day we are required to remove all leavening agents and foods containing them from or homes. We burn them or put them in the garbage rather than take them to a gentile neighbor to keep for us.

Some use romaine lettuce or horseradish for bitter herbs, or both, or other bitter vegetable. The matza is bread cooked or baked very quickly ("bread of haste") so as to avoid any version of leavening, and recalling the quick preparations which the Israelites made at the first Passover in Egypt. Also, accordingly, we are relaxed when eating but fully dressed as if we had to leave any minute.

Strangely enough wine of grape juice is not required in the biblical text of the first Passover. We do use either though, but not as symbolic of blood, etc. We are simply drinking a typical beverage used for celebration.

You can purchase matza in many grocery stores at this time of the year. But you can make your own. Our family makes matza from plain (not self-rising or enriched) whole wheat flour or barley flour. With a little water and oil, we knead it until it is not sticky and

bake it or grill it or both since we make several "disks" of bread. There is no magical symbolism in the bread, so please do not treat any of the preparation superstitiously or solemnly. It is a celebration of freedom from such nonsense in the gentile world.

Typically my family's favorite menu includes matza, romaine lettuce and horseradish (we like it), salt water, sometimes a bone from the lamb we grill, and wine or grape juice. We eat this with a regular "nice" meal. Our favorite is lamb which we marinate in olive oil, grape juice, and a bit of soy sauce, cut into small pieces. We put the pieces on skewers with small tomatoes, onions, peppers, and grill them.

We do not kill a lamb as a sacrifice, or anything reminiscent of that. We pick it up at a butcher or grocery store. It's probably been dead a week or more before Passover. There is no Temple or priesthood today and the idea of sacrifice is the furthest thing from our minds. But, man, it is good food and we love it.

Passover is not a ritual—it is a remembrance of what the God of Israel did for our ancestors and continues to do for us as we make our way out of the paganism around us to a world ruled by the commandments and justice of YHWH.

Today there are Christians who mock the Passover by making blasphemous symbols to their religion in the foods of Passover. The Passover is not for idolaters—it celebrates freedom from idolaters. The Egyptians worshipped a lamb as a god; God told the Israelites to kill a lamb in the middle of a lamb-worshippers! Many of these Christians at these church "passovers" additionally are not circumcised (in flesh or spirit). An uncircumcised male is absolutely not allowed to participate in the Passover.

The Passover is also, like most holy days, a night of teaching. We use a "haggadah" as a "lesson plan" for the night. You can obtain a Haggadah currently in English, Dutch, and Spanish in Adobe Acrobat format which can be read onscreen and printed.

English– http://ebionite.org/haggadah05.pdf
Dutch– http://ebionite.org/dutchhaggadah05.pdf
Spanish- http://ebionite.org/haggadahespanol.pdf

Although there is a haggadah to use, we also suggest using anything that impresses the meaning of the Passover to your children during the meal and after. Let them stay up late, and perhaps have some treats, read picture books about the Passover story or watch videos. *The Prince of Egypt* is a favorite here. But also use the meal to discuss the aspects of Passover and our faith to adults also. These discussions can run long into the night so remember the children and their limited attention span.

We are told in Wayyiqra (Leviticus) 23:5-6 that the Celebration of Unleavened Breads is a separate commemoration. There are other opinions and some compact Passover with Unleavened Breads. We do not.

We take the Passover as a non-rest day (as Israelites had to leave Egypt that day) and the 15th day of the (lunar) month as the rest day beginning Unleavened Breads. We include matza in our meals and exclude all leaven from our homes and diet for seven days through the 21 of the (lunar) month until the evening, the 21st also being a day of rest.

## For the Kids

### Passover Cookie Recipe

Here is a recipe for unleavened chocolate chip cookies.

2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup oil or margarine
1 cup Matza meal (crumbled store matza)
1cup farfel (crumbled dry noodles)
6 oz chocolate chips (pareve, for Passover)
1 cup chopped nut (almonds)

Mix dry ingredients. Mix beaten eggs and margarine, pour over dry stuff, mix well. Spoon on to cookie sheet. Bake at 350 for 20 minutes.

# *Our Liberation*

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